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1332

OF

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

IN ELEVEN VOLUMES.

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THE

THE RAMBLER.

NUMB. 71. TUESDAY, *November* 20, 1750.

Vivere quod propero pauper, nec inutilis annis
Da veniam, properat vivere nemo ſatis. MART.

True, ſir, to live I haſte, your pardon give,
For tell me, who makes haſte enough to live? F. LEWIS.

MANY words and ſentences are ſo frequently heard in the mouths of men, that a ſuperficial obſerver is inclined to believe, that they muſt contain ſome primary principle, ſome great rule of action, which it is proper always to have preſent to the attention, and by which the uſe of every hour is to be adjuſted. Yet, if we conſider the conduct of thoſe ſententious philoſophers, it will often be found, that they repeat theſe aphoriſms, merely becauſe they have ſomewhere heard them, becauſe they have nothing elſe to ſay, or becauſe they think veneration gained by ſuch appearances of wiſdom, but that no ideas are annexed to the words,

 and

and that according to the old blunder of the followers of *Ariſtotle*, their ſouls are mere pipes or organs, which tranſmit ſounds, but do not underſtand them.

Of this kind is the well known and well atteſted poſition, that *life is ſhort*, which may be heard among mankind by an attentive auditor, many times a day, but which never yet within my reach of obſervation left any impreſſion upon the mind; and perhaps, if my readers will turn their thoughts back upon their old friends, they will find it difficult to call a ſingle man to remembrance, who appeared to know that life was ſhort till he was about to loſe it.

It is obſervable that *Horace*, in his account of the characters of men, as they are diverſified by the various influence of time, remarks, that the old man is *dilator*, *ſpe longus*, given to procaſtination, and inclined to extend his hopes to a great diſtance. So far are we generally from thinking what we often ſay of the ſhortneſs of life, that at the time when it is neceſſarily ſhorteſt, we form projects which we delay to execute, indulge ſuch expectations as nothing but a long train of events can gratify, and ſuffer thoſe paſſions to gain upon us, which are only excuſable in the prime of life.

Theſe reflections were lately excited in my mind, by an evening's converſation with my friend *Proſpero*, who, at the age of fifty-five, has bought an eſtate, and is now contriving to diſpoſe and cultivate it with uncommon elegance. His great pleaſure is to walk among ſtately trees, and lie muſing in the heat of noon under their ſhade; he is therefore maturely conſidering how he ſhall diſpoſe his walks

and

and his groves, and has at laſt determined to ſend for the beſt plans from *Italy*, and forbear planting till the next ſeaſon.

Thus is life trifled away in preparations to do what never can be done, if it be left unattempted till all the requiſites which imagination can ſuggeſt are gathered together. Where our deſign terminates only in our own ſatisfaction, the miſtake is of no great importance; for the pleaſure of expecting enjoyment, is often greater than that of obtaining it, and the completion of almoſt every wiſh is found a diſappointment; but when many others are intereſted in an undertaking, when any deſign is formed, in which the improvement or ſecurity of mankind is involved, nothing is more unworthy either of wiſdom or benevolence, than to delay it from time to time, or to forget how much every day that paſſes over us takes away from our power, and how ſoon an idle purpoſe to do an action, ſinks into a mournful wiſh that it had once been done.

We are frequently importuned, by the bacchanalian writers, to lay hold on the preſent hour, to catch the pleaſures within our reach, and remember that futurity is not at our coummand.

> *Τὸ ῥόδον ἀκμάζει βαιὸν χρόνον. ἢν δὲ παρέλθῃς,*
> *Ζητῶν εὑρήσεις οὐ ῥόδον, ἀλλὰ βάτον.*

> Soon fades the roſe; once paſt the fragrant hour,
> The loiterer finds a bramble for a flow'r.

But ſurely theſe exhortations may, with equal propriety, be applied to better purpoſes; it may be at leaſt inculcated, that pleaſures are more ſafely

poſtponed than virtues, and that greater loſs is ſuffered by miſſing an opportunity of doing good, than an hour of giddy frolick and noiſy merriment.

When *Baxter* had loſt a thouſand pounds, which he had laid up for the erection of a ſchool, he uſed frequently to mention the misfortune as an incitement to be charitable while God gives the power of beſtowing, and conſidered himſelf as culpable in ſome degree for having left a good action in the hands of chance, and ſuffered his benevolence to be defeated for want of quickneſs and diligence.

It is lamented by *Hearne*, the learned antiquary of *Oxford*, that this general forgetfulneſs of the fragility of life, has remarkably infected the ſtudents of monuments and records; as their employment conſiſts firſt in collecting, and afterwards in arranging or abſtracting what libraries afford them, they ought to amaſs no more than they can digeſt; but when they have undertaken a work, they go on ſearching and tranſcribing, call for new ſupplies, when they are already overburthened, and at laſt leave their work unfiniſhed. *It is*, ſays he, *the buſineſs of a good antiquary, as of a good man, to have mortality always before him.*

Thus, not only in the ſlumber of ſloth, but in the diſſipation of ill-directed induſtry, is the ſhortneſs of life generally forgotten. As ſome men loſe their hours in lazineſs, becauſe they ſuppoſe, that there is time enough for the reparation of neglect; others buſy themſelves in providing that no length of life may want employment; and it often happens,

pens, that ſluggiſhneſs and activity are equally ſurpriſed by the laſt ſummons, and periſh not more differently from each other, than the fowl that received the ſhot in her flight, from her that is killed upon the buſh.

Among the many improvements made by the laſt centuries in human knowledge, may be numbered the exact calculations of the value of life; but whatever may be their uſe in traffick, they ſeem very little to have advanced morality. They have hitherto been rather applied to the acquiſition of money, than of wiſdom; the computer refers none of his calculations to his own tenure, but perſiſts, in contempt of probability, to foretel old age to himſelf, and believes that he is marked out to reach the utmoſt verge of human exiſtence, and ſee thouſands and ten thouſands fall into the grave.

So deeply is this fallacy rooted in the heart, and ſo ſtrongly guarded by hope and fear againſt the approach of reaſon, that neither ſcience nor experience can ſhake it, and we act as if life were without end, though we ſee and confeſs its uncertainty and ſhortneſs.

Divines have, with great ſtrength and ardour, ſhewn the abſurdity of delaying reformation and repentance; a degree of folly indeed, which ſets eternity to hazard. It is the ſame weakneſs, in proportion to the importance of the neglect, to tranſfer any care, which now claims our attention, to a future time; we ſubject ourſelves to needleſs dangers from accidents which early diligence would have obviated, or perplex our minds by vain precautions, and make proviſion for the execution of deſigns, of

which the opportunity once miſſed never will return.

As he that lives longeſt lives but a little while, every man may be certain that he has no time to waſte. The duties of life are commenſurate to its duration, and every day brings its taſk, which if neglected is doubled on the morrow. But he that has already trifled away thoſe months and years, in which he ſhould have laboured, muſt remember that he has now only a part of that of which the whole is little; and that ſince the few moments remaining are to be conſidered as the laſt truſt of heaven, not one is to be loſt.

NUMB. 72. SATURDAY, *November* 24, 1750.

Omnis Ariſtippum *decuit ſtatus, et color, et res,*
Sectantem majora fere; preſentibus æquum. HOR.

Yet *Ariſtippus* ev'ry dreſs became;
In ev'ry various change of life the ſame;
And though he aim'd at things of higher kind,
Yet to the preſent held an equal mind. FRANCIS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOSE who exalt themſelves into the chair of inſtruction, without enquiring whether any will ſubmit to their authority, have not ſufficiently conſidered how much of human life paſſes in little incidents, curſory converſation, ſlight buſineſs, and caſual

caſual amuſements; and therefore they have endeavoured only to inculcate the more awful virtues, without condeſcending to regard thoſe petty qualities, which grow important only by their frequency, and which though they produce no ſingle acts of heroiſm, nor aſtoniſh us by great events, yet are every moment exerting their influence upon us, and make the draught of life ſweet or bitter by imperceptible inſtillations. They operate unſeen and unregarded, as change of air makes us ſick or healthy, though we breathe it without attention, and only know the particles that impregnate it by their ſalutary or malignant effects.

You have ſhewn yourſelf not ignorant of the value of thoſe ſubaltern endowments, yet have hitherto neglected to recommend good-humour to the world, though a little reflection will ſhew you that it is the *balm of being*, the quality to which all that adorns or elevates mankind muſt owe its power of pleaſing. Without good-humour, learning and bravery can only confer that ſuperiority which ſwells the heart of the lion in the deſert, where he roars without reply, and ravages without reſiſtance. Without good-humour virtue may awe by its dignity, and amaze by its brightneſs; but muſt always be viewed at a diſtance, and will ſcarcely gain a friend or attract an imitator.

Good-humour may be defined a habit of being pleaſed; a conſtant and perennial ſoftneſs of manner, eaſineſs of approach, and ſuavity of diſpoſition; like that which every man perceives in himſelf, when the firſt tranſports of new felicity have ſubſided, and his thoughts are only kept in motion by a ſlow ſuc-

ceſſion of ſoft impulſes. Good-humour is a ſtate between gaiety and unconcern; the act or emanation of a mind, at leiſure to regard the gratification of another.

It is imagined by many, that whenever they aſpire to pleaſe, they are required to be merry, and to ſhew the gladneſs of their ſouls by flights of pleaſantry, and burſts of laughter. But though theſe men may be for a time heard with applauſe and admiration, they ſeldom delight us long. We enjoy them a little, and then retire to eaſineſs and good-humour, as the eye gazes awhile on eminences glittering with the ſun, but ſoon turns aching away to verdure and to flowers.

Gaiety is to good-humour as animal perfumes to vegetable fragrance; the one overpowers weak ſpirits, and the other recreates and revives them. Gaiety ſeldom fails to give ſome pain; the hearers either ſtrain their faculties to accompany its towerings, or are left behind in envy and deſpair. Good-humour boaſts no faculties which every one does not believe in his own power, and pleaſes principally by not offending.

It is well known that the moſt certain way to give any man pleaſure, is to perſuade him that you receive pleaſure from him, to encourage him to freedom and confidence, and to avoid any ſuch appearance of ſuperiority as may overbear and depreſs him. We ſee many that by this art only, ſpend their days in the midſt of careſſes, invitations, and civilities; and without any extraordinary qualities or attainments, are the univerſal favourites of both ſexes, and certainly find a friend in every place. The darlings of the

the world will, indeed, be generally found ſuch as excite neither jealouſy nor fear, and are not conſidered as candidates for any eminent degree of reputation, but content themſelves with common accompliſhments, and endeavour rather to ſolicit kindneſs than to raiſe eſteem; therefore in aſſemblies and places of reſort it ſeldom fails to happen, that though at the entrance of ſome particular perſon every face brightens with gladneſs, and every hand is extended in ſalutation, yet if you purſue him beyond the firſt exchange of civilities, you will find him of very ſmall importance, and only welcome to the company, as one by whom all conceive themſelves admired, and with whom any one is at liberty to amuſe himſelf when he can find no other auditor or companion, as one with whom all are at eaſe, who will hear a jeſt without criticiſm, and a narrative without contradiction, who laughs with every wit, and yields to every diſputer.

There are many whoſe vanity always inclines them to aſſociate with thoſe from whom they have no reaſon to fear mortification; and there are times in which the wiſe and the knowing are willing to receive praiſe without the labour of deſerving it, in which the moſt elevated mind is willing to deſcend, and the moſt active to be at reſt. All therefore are at ſome hour or another fond of companions whom they can entertain upon eaſy terms, and who will relieve them from ſolitude, without condemning them to vigilance and caution. We are moſt inclined to love when we have nothing to fear, and he that encourages us to pleaſe ourſelves, will not be long without preference in our affection to thoſe whoſe learning

ing holds us at the diſtance of pupils, or whoſe wit calls all attention from us, and leaves us without importance and without regard.

It is remarked by prince *Henry*, when he ſees *Falſtaff* lying on the ground, that *he could have better ſpared a better man.* He was well acquainted with the vices and follies of him whom he lamented, but while his conviction compelled him to do juſtice to ſuperior qualities, his tenderneſs ſtill broke out at the remembrance of *Falſtaff*, of the cheerful companion, the loud buffoon, with whom he had paſſed his time in all the luxury of idleneſs, who had gladded him with unenvied merriment, and whom he could at once enjoy and deſpiſe.

You may perhaps think this account of thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed for their good-humour, not very conſiſtent with the praiſes which I have beſtowed upon it. But ſurely nothing can more evidently ſhew the value of this quality, than that it recommends thoſe who are deſtitute of all other excellencies, and procures regard to the trifling, friendſhip to the worthleſs, and affection to the dull.

Good-humour is indeed generally degraded by the characters in which it is found; for being conſidered as a cheap and vulgar quality, we find it often neglected by thoſe that having excellencies of higher reputation and brighter ſplendor, perhaps imagine that they have ſome right to gratify themſelves at the expence of others, and are to demand compliance, rather than to practiſe it. It is by ſome unfortunate miſtake that almoſt all thoſe who have any claim to eſteem or love, preſs their pretenſions with too little conſideration of others. This miſtake my

own

own intereſt, as well as my zeal for general happineſs, makes me deſirous to rectify; for I have a friend, who, becauſe he knows his own fidelity and uſefulneſs, is never willing to ſink into a companion: I have a wife whoſe beauty firſt ſubdued me, and whoſe wit confirmed her conqueſt, but whoſe beauty now ſerves no other purpoſe than to entitle her to tyranny, and whoſe wit is only uſed to juſtify perverſeneſs.

Surely nothing can be more unreaſonable than to loſe the will to pleaſe, when we are conſcious of the power, or ſhow more cruelty than to chuſe any kind of influence before that of kindneſs. He that regards the welfare of others, ſhould make his virtue approachable, that it may be loved and copied; and he that conſiders the wants which every man feels, or will feel of external aſſiſtance, muſt rather wiſh to be ſurrounded by thoſe that love him, than by thoſe that admire his excellencies, or ſolicit his favours; for admiration ceaſes with novelty, and intereſt gains its end and retires. A man whoſe great qualities want the ornament of ſuperficial attractions, is like a naked mountain with mines of gold, which will be frequented only till the treaſure is exhauſted.

I am, &c.

PHILOMIDES.

NUMB. 73. TUESDAY, *November* 27, 1750.

Stulte quid heu votis frustra puerilibus optas
Quæ non ulla tulit, fertve, feretve dies. OVID.

Why thinks the fool with childish hope to see
What neither is, nor was, nor e'er shall be?
ELPHINSTON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

IF you feel any of that compassion, which you recommend to others, you will not disregard a case which I have reason from observation to believe very common, and which I know by experience to be very miserable. And though the querulous are seldom received with great ardour of kindness, I hope to escape the mortification of finding that my lamentations spread the contagion of impatience, and produce anger rather than tenderness. I write not merely to vent the swelling of my heart, but to enquire by what means I may recover my tranquillity; and shall endeavour at brevity in my narrative, having long known that complaint quickly tires, however elegant, or however just.

I was born in a remote county, of a family that boasts alliances with the greatest names in *English* history, and extends its claims of affinity to the *Tudors*, and *Plantagenets*. My ancestors, by little and little, wasted their patrimony, till my father had not enough left for the support of a family, without descending

ſcending to the cultivation of his own grounds, being condemned to pay three ſiſters the fortunes allotted them by my grandfather, who is ſuſpected to have made his will when he was incapable of adjuſting properly the claims of his children, and who, perhaps without deſign, enriched his daughters by beggaring his ſon. My aunts being, at the death of their father, neither young nor beautiful, nor very eminent for ſoftneſs of behaviour, were ſuffered to live unſolicited, and by accumulating the intereſt of their portions grew every day richer and prouder. My father pleaſed himſelf with foreſeeing that the poſſeſſions of thoſe ladies muſt revert at laſt to the hereditary eſtate, and that his family might loſe none of its dignity, reſolved to keep me untainted with a lucrative employment; whenever therefore I diſcovered any inclination to the improvement of my condition, my mother never failed to put me in mind of my birth, and charged me to do nothing with which I might be reproached when I ſhould come to my aunts eſtate.

In all the perplexities or vexations which want of money brought upon us, it was our conſtant practice to have recourſe to futurity. If any of our neighbours ſurpaſſed us in appearance, we went home and contrived an equipage, with which the death of my aunts was to ſupply us. If any purſe-proud upſtart was deficient in reſpect, vengeance was referred to the time in which our eſtate was to be repaired. We regiſtered every act of civility and rudeneſs, enquired the number of diſhes at every feaſt, and minuted the furniture of every houſe, that we might, when the hour of affluence ſhould

come,

come, be able to eclipſe all their ſplendor, and ſurpaſs all their magnificence.

Upon plans of elegance and ſchemes of pleaſure the day roſe and ſet, and the year went round unregarded, while we were buſied in laying out plantations on ground not yet our own, and deliberating whether the manor-houſe ſhould be rebuilt or repaired. This was the amuſement of our leiſure, and the ſolace of our exigencies; we met together only to contrive how our approaching fortune ſhould be enjoyed; for in this our converſation always ended, on whatever ſubject it began. We had none of the collateral intereſts, which diverſify the life of others with joys and hopes, but had turned our whole attention on one event, which we could neither haſten nor retard, and had no other object of curioſity, than the health or ſickneſs of my aunts, of which we were careful to procure very exact and early intelligence.

This viſionary opulence for a while ſoothed our imagination, but afterwards fired our wiſhes, and exaſperated our neceſſities, and my father could not always reſtrain himſelf from exclaiming, that *no creature had ſo many lives as a cat and an old maid.* At laſt, upon the recovery of his ſiſter from an ague, which ſhe was ſuppoſed to have caught by ſparing fire, he began to loſe his ſtomach, and four months afterwards ſunk into the grave.

My mother, who loved her huſband, ſurvived him but a little while, and left me the ſole heir of their lands, their ſchemes, and their wiſhes. As I had not enlarged my conceptions either by books or converſation, I differed only from my father by the freſhneſs

neſs of my cheeks, and the vigour of my ſtep; and, like him, gave way to no thoughts but of enjoying the wealth which my aunts were hoarding.

At length the eldeſt fell ill. I paid the civilities and compliments which ſickneſs requires with the utmoſt punctuality. I dreamed every night of eſcutcheons and white gloves, and enquired every morning at an early hour, whether there were any news of my dear aunt. At laſt a meſſenger was ſent to inform me that I muſt come to her without the delay of a moment. I went and heard her laſt advice, but opening her will, found that ſhe had left her fortune to her ſecond ſiſter.

I hung my head; the younger ſiſter threatened to be married, and every thing was diſappointment and diſcontent. I was in danger of loſing irreparably one third of my hopes, and was condemned ſtill to wait for the reſt. Of part of my terror I was ſoon eaſed; for the youth, whom his relations would have compelled to marry the old lady, after innumerable ſtipulations, articles, and ſettlements, ran away with the daughter of his father's groom; and my aunt, upon this conviction of the perfidy of man, reſolved never to liſten more to amorous addreſſes.

Ten years longer I dragged the ſhackles of expectation, without ever ſuffering a day to paſs, in which I did not compute how much my chance was improved of being rich to-morrow. At laſt the ſecond lady died, after a ſhort illneſs, which yet was long enough to afford her time for the diſpoſal of her eſtate, which ſhe gave to me after the death of her ſiſter.

I was now relieved from part of my miſery; a larger fortune, though not in my power, was certain and unalienable; nor was there now any danger, that I might at laſt be fruſtrated of my hopes by a fret of dotage, the flatteries of a chamber-maid, the whiſpers of a tale-bearer, or the officiouſneſs of a nurſe. But my wealth was yet in reverſion, my aunt was to be buried before I could emerge to grandeur and pleaſure; and there were yet, according to my father's obſervation, nine lives between me and happineſs.

I however lived on, without any clamours of diſcontent, and comforted myſelf with conſidering, that all are mortal, and they who are continually decaying muſt at laſt be deſtroyed.

But let no man from this time ſuffer his felicity to depend on the death of his aunt. The good gentlewoman was very regular in her hours, and ſimple in her diet, and in walking or ſitting ſtill, waking or ſleeping, had always in view the preſervation of her health. She was ſubject to no diſorder but hypochondriac dejection; by which, without intention, ſhe increaſed my miſeries, for whenever the weather was cloudy, ſhe would take her bed and ſend me notice that her time was come. I went with all the haſte of eagerneſs, and ſometimes received paſſionate injunctions to be kind to her maid, and directions how the laſt offices ſhould be performed; but if before my arrival the ſun happened to break out, or the wind to change, I met her at the door, or found her in the garden, buſtling and vigilant, with all the tokens of long life.

Sometimes, however, ſhe fell into diſtempers, and was thrice given over by the doctor, yet ſhe found means of ſlipping through the gripe of death, and after having tortured me three months at each time with violent alternations of hope and fear, came out of her chamber without any other hurt than the loſs of fleſh, which in a few weeks ſhe recovered by broths and jellies.

As moſt have ſagacity ſufficient to gueſs at the deſires of an heir, it was the conſtant practice of thoſe who were hoping at ſecond hand, and endeavoured to ſecure my favour againſt the time when I ſhould be rich, to pay their court, by informing me that my aunt began to droop, that ſhe had lately a bad night, that ſhe coughed feebly, and that ſhe could never climb *May* hill; or at leaſt, that the autumn would carry her off. Thus was I flattered in the winter with the piercing winds of *March*, and in ſummer, with the fogs of *September*. But ſhe lived through ſpring and fall, and ſet heat and cold at defiance, till after near half a century, I buried her on the fourteenth of laſt *June*, aged ninety-three years, five months, and ſix days.

For two months after her death I was rich, and was pleaſed with that obſequiouſneſs and reverence which wealth inſtantaneouſly procures. But this joy is now paſt, and I have returned again to my old habit of wiſhing. Being accuſtomed to give the future full power over my mind, and to ſtart away from the ſcene before me to ſome expected enjoyment, I deliver up myſelf to the tyranny of every deſire which fancy ſuggeſts, and long for a thouſand things which I am unable to procure. Money

has much leſs power, than is aſcribed to it by thoſe that want it. I had formed ſchemes which I cannot execute, I had ſuppoſed events which do not come to paſs, and the reſt of my life muſt paſs in craving ſolicitude, unleſs you can find ſome remedy for a mind, corrupted with an inveterate diſeaſe of wiſhing, and unable to think on any thing but wants, which reaſon tells me will never be ſupplied.

I am, &c.

CUPIDUS.

NUMB. 74. SATURDAY, *December* 1, 1750.

Rixatur de lanâ ſæpe caprina. HOR.

For nought tormented, ſhe for nought torments.

ELPHINSTON.

MEN ſeldom give pleaſure, where they are not pleaſed themſelves; it is neceſſary, therefore, to cultivate an habitual alacrity and cheerfulneſs, that in whatever ſtate we may be placed by Providence, whether we are appointed to confer or receive benefits, to implore or to afford protection, we may ſecure the love of thoſe with whom we tranſact. For though it is generally imagined, that he who grants favours, may ſpare any attention to his behaviour, and that uſefulneſs will always procure friends; yet it has been found that there is an art of granting requeſts, an art very difficult of attainment; that officiouſneſs and liberality may be ſo adul-

adulterated, as to loſe the greater part of their effect; that compliance may provoke, relief may haraſs, and liberality diſtreſs.

No diſeaſe of the mind can more fatally diſable it from benevolence, the chief duty of ſocial beings, than ill-humour or peeviſhneſs; for though it breaks not out in paroxiſms of outrage, nor burſts into clamour, turbulence, and bloodſhed, it wears out happineſs by ſlow corroſion, and ſmall injuries inceſſantly repeated. It may be conſidered as the canker of life, that deſtroys its vigour, and checks its improvement, that creeps on with hourly depredations, and taints and vitiates what it cannot conſume.

Peeviſhneſs, when it has been ſo far indulged, as to outrun the motions of the will, and diſcover itſelf without premeditation, is a ſpecies of depravity in the higheſt degree diſguſting and offenſive, becauſe no rectitude of intention, nor ſoftneſs of addreſs, can enſure a moment's exemption from affront and indignity. While we are courting the favour of a peeviſh man, and exerting ourſelves in the moſt diligent civility, an unlucky ſyllable diſpleaſes, an unheeded circumſtance ruffles and exaſperates; and in the moment when we congratulate ourſelves upon having gained a friend, our endeavours are fruſtrated at once, and all our aſſiduity forgotten in the caſual tumult of ſome trifling irritation.

This troubleſome impatience is ſometimes nothing more than the ſymptom of ſome deeper malady. He that is angry without daring to confeſs his reſentment, or ſorrowful without the liberty of telling his grief, is too frequently inclined to give vent to the fermentations of his mind at the firſt paſ-

ſages that are opened, and to let his paſſions boil over upon thoſe whom accident throws in his way. A painful and tedious courſe of ſickneſs frequently produces ſuch an alarming apprehenſion of the leaſt increaſe of uneaſineſs, as keeps the ſoul perpetually on the watch, ſuch a reſtleſs and inceſſant ſolicitude, as no care or tenderneſs can appeaſe, and can only be pacified by the cure of the diſtemper, and the removal of that pain by which it is excited.

Nearly approaching to this weakneſs, is the captiouſneſs of old age. When the ſtrength is cruſhed, the ſenſes dulled, and the common pleaſures of life become inſipid by repetition, we are willing to impute our uneaſineſs to cauſes not wholly out of our power, and pleaſe ourſelves with fancying that we ſuffer by neglect, unkindneſs, or any evil which admits a remedy, rather than by the decays of nature, which cannot be prevented or repaired. We therefore revenge our pains upon thoſe on whom we reſolve to charge them; and too often drive mankind away at the time we have the greateſt need of tenderneſs and aſſiſtance.

But though peeviſhneſs may ſometimes claim our compaſſion, as the conſequence or concomitant of miſery, it is very often found, where nothing can juſtify or excuſe its admiſſion. It is frequently one of the attendants on the proſperous, and is employed by inſolence in exacting homage, or by tyranny in haraſſing ſubjection. It is the offspring of idleneſs or pride; of idleneſs anxious for trifles; or pride unwilling to endure the leaſt obſtruction of her wiſhes. Thoſe who have long lived in ſolitude indeed naturally contract this unſocial quality,

becaufe, having long had only themfelves to pleafe, they do not readily depart from their own inclinations; their fingularities therefore are only blameable, when they have imprudently or morofely withdrawn themfelves from the world; but there are others, who have, without any neceffity, nurfed up this habit in their minds, by making implicit fubmiffivenefs the condition of their favour, and fuffering none to approach them, but thofe who never fpeak but to applaud, or move but to obey.

He that gives himfelf up to his own fancy, and converfes with none but fuch as he hires to lull him on the down of abfolute authority, to footh him with obfequioufnefs, and regale him with flattery, foon grows too flothful for the labour of conteft, too tender for the afperity of contradiction, and too delicate for the coarfenefs of truth; a little oppofition offends, a little reftraint enrages, and a little difficulty perplexes him; having been accuftomed to fee every thing give way to his humour, he foon forgets his own littlenefs, and expects to find the world rolling at his beck, and all mankind employed to accommodate and delight him.

Tetrica had a large fortune bequeathed to her by an aunt, which made her very early independent, and placed her in a ftate of fuperiority to all about her. Having no fuperfluity of underftanding, fhe was foon intoxicated by the flatteries of her maid, who informed her that ladies, fuch as fhe, had nothing to do but take pleafure their own way; that fhe wanted nothing from others, and had therefore no reafon to value their opinion; that money was every thing; and that they who thought themfelves

ill-treated, ſhould look for better uſage among their equals.

Warm with theſe generous ſentiments, *Tetrica* came forth into the world, in which ſhe endeavoured to force reſpect by haughtineſs of mien and vehemence of language; but having neither birth, beauty, nor wit, in any uncommon degree, ſhe ſuffered ſuch mortifications from thoſe who thought themſelves at liberty to return her inſults, as reduced her turbulence to cooler malignity, and taught her to practiſe her arts of vexation only where ſhe might hope to tyrannize without reſiſtance. She continued from her twentieth to her fifty-fifth year to torment all her inferiors with ſo much diligence, that ſhe has formed a principle of diſapprobation, and finds in every place ſomething to grate her mind, and diſturb her quiet.

If ſhe takes the air, ſhe is offended with the heat or cold, the glare of the ſun, or the gloom of the clouds; if ſhe makes a viſit, the room in which ſhe is to be received, is too light, or too dark, or furniſhed with ſomething which ſhe cannot ſee without averſion. Her tea is never of the right ſort; the figures on the *China* give her diſguſt. Where there are children, ſhe hates the gabble of brats; where there are none, ſhe cannot bear a place without ſome cheerfulneſs and rattle. If many ſervants are kept in a houſe, ſhe never fails to tell how lord *Laviſh* was ruined by a numerous retinue; if few, ſhe relates the ſtory of a miſer that made his company wait on themſelves. She quarrelled with one family, becauſe ſhe had an unpleaſant view from their windows; with another, becauſe the ſquirrel leaped

within

within two yards of her; and with a third, becauſe ſhe could not bear the noiſe of the parrot.

Of milliners and mantua-makers ſhe is the proverbial torment. She compels them to alter their work, then to unmake it, and contrive it after another faſhion; then changes her mind, and likes it better as it was at firſt; then will have a ſmall improvement. Thus ſhe proceeds till no profit can recompenſe the vexation; they at laſt leave the clothes at her houſe, and refuſe to ſerve her. Her maid, the only being that can endure her tyranny, profeſſes to take her own courſe, and hear her miſtreſs talk. Such is the conſequence of peeviſhneſs; it can be borne only when it is deſpiſed.

It ſometimes happens that too cloſe an attention to minute exactneſs, or a too rigorous habit of examining every thing by the ſtandard of perfection, vitiates the temper, rather than improves the underſtanding, and teaches the mind to diſcern faults with unhappy penetration. It is incident likewiſe to men of vigorous imagination to pleaſe themſelves too much with futurities, and to fret becauſe thoſe expectations are diſappointed, which ſhould never have been formed. Knowledge and genius are often enemies to quiet, by ſuggeſting ideas of excellence, which men and the performances of men cannot attain. But let no man raſhly determine, that his unwillingneſs to be pleaſed is a proof of underſtanding, unleſs his ſuperiority appears from leſs doubtful evidence; for though peeviſhneſs may ſometimes juſtly boaſt its deſcent from learning or from wit, it is much oftener of baſe extraction, the child of vanity, and nurſling of ignorance.

NUMB. 75. TUESDAY, *December* 4, 1750.

Diligitur nemo, niſi cui Fortuna ſecunda eſt,
Quæ, ſimul intonuit, proxima quæque fugat. OVID.

When ſmiling Fortune ſpreads her golden ray,
All crowd around to flatter and obey:
But when ſhe thunders from an angry ſky,
Our friends, our flatterers, our lovers fly. Miſs A. W.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THE diligence with which you endeavour to cultivate the knowledge of nature, manners, and life, will perhaps incline you to pay ſome regard to the obſervations of one who has been taught to know mankind by unwelcome information, and whoſe opinions are the reſult, not of ſolitary conjectures, but of practice and experience.

I was born to a large fortune, and bred to the knowledge of thoſe arts which are ſuppoſed to accompliſh the mind, and adorn the perſon of a woman. To theſe attainments, which cuſtom and education almoſt forced upon me, I added ſome voluntary acquiſitions by the uſe of books, and the converſation of that ſpecies of men whom the ladies generally mention with terror and averſion under the name of ſcholars, but whom I have found a harmleſs and inoffenſive order of beings, not ſo much wiſer than ourſelves, but that they may receive as well as communicate knowledge, and more inclined

to degrade their own character by cowardly ſubmiſſion, than to overbear or oppreſs us with their learning or their wit.

From theſe men, however, if they are by kind treatment encouraged to talk, ſomething may be gained, which, embelliſhed with elegancy, and ſoftened by modeſty, will always add dignity and value to female converſation; and from my acquaintance with the bookiſh part of the world I derived many principles of judgment and maxims of prudence, by which I was enabled to draw upon myſelf the general regard in every place of concourſe or pleaſure. My opinion was the great rule of approbation, my remarks were remembered by thoſe who deſired the ſecond degree of fame, my mien was ſtudied, my dreſs was imitated, my letters were handed from one family to another, and read by thoſe who copied them as ſent to themſelves; my viſits were ſolicited as honours, and multitudes boaſted of an intimacy with *Meliſſa*, who had only ſeen me by accident, and whoſe familiarity had never proceeded beyond the exchange of a compliment, or return of a courteſy.

I ſhall make no ſcruple of confeſſing that I was pleaſed with this univerſal veneration, becauſe I always conſidered it as paid to my intrinſick qualities and inſeparable merit, and very eaſily perſuaded myſelf, that fortune had no part in my ſuperiority. When I looked upon my glaſs I ſaw youth and beauty, with health that might give me reaſon to hope their continuance; when I examined my mind, I found ſome ſtrength of judgment, and fertility of fancy;

and was told that every action was grace, and that every accent was persuasion.

In this manner my life passed like a continual triumph amidst acclamations, and envy, and courtship, and caresses: to please *Melissa* was the general ambition, and every stratagem of artful flattery was practised upon me. To be flattered is grateful, even when we know that our praises are not believed by those who pronounce them: for they prove, at least, our power, and shew that our favour is valued, since it is purchased by the meanness of falsehood. But, perhaps, the flatterer is not often detected, for an honest mind is not apt to suspect, and no one exerts the power of discernment with much vigour when self-love favours the deceit.

The number of adorers, and the perpetual distraction of my thoughts by new schemes of pleasure, prevented me from listening to any of those who crowd in multitudes to give girls advice, and kept me unmarried and unengaged to my twenty-seventh year, when, as I was towering in all the pride of uncontested excellency, with a face yet little impaired, and a mind hourly improving, the failure of a fund, in which my money was placed, reduced me to a frugal competency, which allowed little beyond neatness and independence.

I bore the diminution of my riches without any outrages of sorrow, or pusillanimity of dejection. Indeed I did not know how much I had lost, for, having always heard and thought more of my wit and beauty, than of my fortune, it did not suddenly enter my imagination, that *Melissa* could sink beneath her

eſtabliſhed rank, while her form and her mind continued the ſame; that ſhe could ceaſe to raiſe admiration but by ceaſing to deſerve it, or feel any ſtroke but from the hand of time.

It was in my power to have concealed the loſs, and to have married, by continuing the ſame appearance, with all the credit of my original fortune; but I was not ſo far ſunk in my own eſteem, as to ſubmit to the baſeneſs of fraud, or to deſire any other recommendation than ſenſe and virtue. I therefore diſmiſſed my equipage, ſold thoſe ornaments which were become unſuitable to my new condition, and appeared among thoſe with whom I uſed to converſe with leſs glitter, but with equal ſpirit.

I found myſelf received at every viſit, with ſorrow beyond what is naturally felt for calamities in which we have no part, and was entertained with condolence and conſolation, ſo frequently repeated, that my friends plainly conſulted, rather their own gratification, than my relief. Some from that time refuſed my acquaintance, and forbore, without any provocation, to repay my viſits; ſome viſited me, but after a longer interval than uſual, and every return was ſtill with more delay; nor did any of my female acquaintances fail to introduce the mention of my misfortunes, to compare my preſent and former condition, to tell me how much it muſt trouble me to want the ſplendor which I became ſo well, to look at pleaſures which I had formerly enjoyed, and to ſink to a level with thoſe by whom I had been conſidered as moving in a higher ſphere, and who had hitherto approached me with reverence and ſubmiſſion, which I was now no longer to expect.

Obſerva-

Obſervations like theſe, are commonly nothing better than covert inſults, which ſerve to give vent to the flatulence of pride, but they are now and then imprudently uttered by honeſty and benevolence, and inflict pain where kindneſs is intended; I will, therefore, ſo far maintain my antiquated claim to politeneſs, as to venture the eſtabliſhment of this rule, that no one ought to remind another of miſfortunes of which the ſufferer does not complain, and which there are no means propoſed of alleviating. You have no right to excite thoughts which neceſſarily give pain whenever they return, and which perhaps might not have revived but by abſurd and unſeaſonable compaſſion.

My endleſs train of lovers immediately withdrew, without raiſing any emotions. The greater part had indeed always profeſſed to court, as it is termed, upon the ſquare, had enquired my fortune, and offered ſettlements; theſe had undoubtedly a right to retire without cenſure, ſince they had openly treated for money, as neceſſary to their happineſs, and who can tell how little they wanted any other portion? I have always thought the clamours of women unreaſonable, who imagine themſelves injured becauſe the men who followed them upon the ſuppoſition of a greater fortune, reject them when they are diſcovered to have leſs. I have never known any lady, who did not think wealth a title to ſome ſtipulations in her favour; and ſurely what is claimed by the poſſeſſion of money is juſtly forfeited by its loſs. She that has once demanded a ſettlement has allowed the importance of fortune; and when ſhe cannot ſhew pecuniary merit, why ſhould ſhe think her cheapener obliged to purchaſe?

My

My lovers were not all contented with ſilent deſertion. Some of them revenged the neglect which they had formerly endured by wanton and ſuperfluous inſults, and endeavoured to mortify me, by paying, in my preſence, thoſe civilities to other ladies, which were once devoted only to me. But, as it had been my rule to treat men according to the rank of their intellect, I had never ſuffered any one to waſte his life in ſuſpenſe, who could have employed it to better purpoſe, and had therefore no enemies but coxcombs, whoſe reſentment and reſpect were equally below my conſideration.

The only pain which I have felt from degradation, is the loſs of that influence which I had always exerted on the ſide of virtue, in the defence of innocence, and the aſſertion of truth. I now find my opinions ſlighted, my ſentiments criticiſed, and my arguments oppoſed by thoſe that uſed to liſten to me without reply, and ſtruggle to be firſt in expreſſing their conviction.

The female diſputants have wholly thrown off my authority; and if I endeavour to enforce my reaſons by an appeal to the ſcholars that happen to be preſent, the wretches are certain to pay their court by ſacrificing me and my ſyſtem to a finer gown, and I am every hour inſulted with contradiction by cowards, who could never find till lately that *Meliſſa* was liable to error.

There are two perſons only whom I cannot charge with having changed their conduct with my change of fortune. One is an old curate that has paſſed his life in the duties of his profeſſion, with great reputation for his knowledge and piety; the other is a

lieutenant

lieutenant of dragoons. The parſon made no difficulty in the height of my elevation to check me when I was pert, and inſtruct me when I blundered; and if there is any alteration, he is now more timorous leſt his freedom ſhould be thought rudeneſs. The ſoldier never paid me any particular addreſſes, but very rigidly obſerved all the rules of politeneſs, which he is now ſo far from relaxing, that whenever he ſerves the tea, he obſtinately carries me the firſt diſh, in defiance of the frowns and whiſpers of the table.

This, Mr. RAMBLER, is *to ſee the world.* It is impoſſible for thoſe that have only known affluence and proſperity, to judge rightly of themſelves or others. The rich and the powerful live in a perpetual maſquerade, in which all about them wear borrowed characters; and we only diſcover in what eſtimation we are held, when we can no longer give hopes or fears.

I am, &c.

MELISSA.

NUMB. 76. SATURDAY, *December* 8, 1750.

——Silvis ubi passim
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit,
Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit, unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus. HOR.

While mazy error draws mankind astray
From truth's sure path, each takes his devious way;
One to the right, one to the left recedes,
Alike deluded, as each fancy leads. ELPHINSTON.

IT is easy for every man, whatever be his character with others, to find reasons for esteeming himself, and therefore censure, contempt, or conviction of crimes, seldom deprive him of his own favour. Those, indeed, who can see only external facts, may look upon him with abhorrence, but when he calls himself to his own tribunal he finds every fault, if not absolutely effaced, yet so much palliated by the goodness of his intention, and the cogency of the motive, that very little guilt or turpitude remains; and when he takes a survey of the whole complication of his character, he discovers so many latent excellencies, so many virtues that want but an opportunity to exert themselves in act, and so many kind wishes for universal happiness, that he looks on himself as suffering unjustly under the infamy of single failings, while the general temper of his mind is unknown or unregarded.

It is natural to mean well, when only abstracted ideas of virtue are proposed to the mind, and no particular passion turns us aside from rectitude; and so willing

willing is every man to flatter himſelf, that the difference between approving laws, and obeying them, is frequently forgotten; he that acknowledges the obligations of morality, and pleaſes his vanity with enforcing them to others, concludes himſelf zealous in the cauſe of virtue, though he has no longer any regard to her precepts, than they conform to his own deſires; and counts himſelf among her warmeſt lovers, becauſe he praiſes her beauty, though every rival ſteals away his heart.

There are, however, great numbers who have little recourſe to the refinements of ſpeculation, but who yet live at peace with themſelves, by means which require leſs underſtanding, or leſs attention. When their hearts are burthened with the conſciouſneſs of a crime, inſtead of ſeeking for ſome remedy within themſelves, they look round upon the reſt of mankind, to find others tainted with the ſame guilt: they pleaſe themſelves with obſerving, that they have numbers on their ſide; and that though they are hunted out from the ſociety of good men, they are not likely to be condemned to ſolitude.

It may be obſerved, perhaps without exception, that none are ſo induſtrious to detect wickedneſs, or ſo ready to impute it, as they whoſe crimes are apparent and confeſſed. They envy an unblemiſhed reputation, and what they envy they are buſy to deſtroy: they are unwilling to ſuppoſe themſelves meaner and more corrupt than others, and therefore willingly pull down from their elevations thoſe with whom they cannot riſe to an equality. No man yet was ever wicked without ſecret diſcontent, and according to the different degrees of remaining virtue,

or unextinguiſhed reaſon, he either endeavours to reform himſelf, or corrupt others; either to regain the ſtation which he has quitted, or prevail on others to imitate his defection.

It has always been conſidered as an alleviation of miſery not to ſuffer alone, even when union and ſociety can contribute nothing to reſiſtance or eſcape; ſome comfort of the ſame kind ſeems to incite wickedneſs to ſeek aſſociates, though indeed another reaſon may be given, for as guilt is propagated the power of reproach is diminiſhed, and among numbers equally deteſtable every individual may be ſheltered from ſhame, though not from conſcience.

Another lenitive by which the throbs of the breaſt are aſſuaged, is, the contemplation, not of the ſame, but of different crimes. He that cannot juſtify himſelf by his reſemblance to others, is ready to try ſome other expedient, and to enquire what will riſe to his advantage from oppoſition and diſſimilitude. He eaſily finds ſome faults in every human being, which he weighs againſt his own, and eaſily makes them preponderate while he keeps the balance in his own hand, and throws in or takes out at his pleaſure circumſtances that make them heavier or lighter. He then triumphs in his comparative purity, and ſets himſelf at eaſe, not becauſe he can refute the charges advanced againſt him, but becauſe he can cenſure his accuſers with equal juſtice, and no longer fears the arrows of reproach, when he has ſtored his magazine of malice with weapons equally ſharp and equally envenomed.

This practice, though never juſt, is yet ſpecious and artful, when the cenſure is directed againſt de-

viations to the contrary extreme. The man who is branded with cowardice, may, with ſome appearance of propriety, turn all his force of argument againſt a ſtupid contempt of life, and raſh precipitation into unneceſſary danger. Every receſſion from temerity is an approach towards cowardice, and though it be confeſſed that bravery, like other virtues, ſtands between faults on either hand, yet the place of the middle point may always be diſputed; he may therefore often impoſe upon careleſs underſtandings, by turning the attention wholly from himſelf, and keeping it fixed invariably on the oppoſite fault; and by ſhewing how many evils are avoided by his behaviour, he may conceal for a time thoſe which are incurred.

But vice has not always opportunities or addreſs for ſuch artful ſubterfuges; men often extenuate their own guilt, only by vague and general charges upon others, or endeavour to gain reſt to themſelves, by pointing ſome other prey to the purſuit of cenſure.

Every whiſper of infamy is induſtriouſly circulated, every hint of ſuſpicion eagerly improved, and every failure of conduct joyfully publiſhed, by thoſe whoſe intereſt it is, that the eye and voice of the publick ſhould be employed on any rather than on themſelves.

All theſe artifices, and a thouſand others equally vain and equally deſpicable, are incited by that conviction of the deformity of wickedneſs, from which none can ſet himſelf free, and by an abſurd deſire to ſeparate the cauſe from the effects, and to enjoy the profit of crimes without ſuffering the ſhame. Men

are willing to try all methods of reconciling guilt and quiet, and when their underſtandings are ſtubborn and uncomplying, raiſe their paſſions againſt them, and hope to overpower their own knowledge.

It is generally not ſo much the deſire of men, ſunk into depravity, to deceive the world as themſelves, for when no particular circumſtances make them dependant on others, infamy diſturbs them little, but as it revives their remorſe, and is echoed to them from their own hearts. The ſentence moſt dreaded is that of reaſon and conſcience, which they would engage on their ſide at any price but the labours of duty, and the ſorrows of repentance. For this purpoſe every ſeducement and fallacy is ſought, the hopes ſtill reſt upon ſome new experiment till life is at an end; and the laſt hour ſteals on unperceived, while the faculties are engaged in reſiſting reaſon, and repreſſing the ſenſe of the divine diſapprobation.

NUMB. 77. TUESDAY, *December* 11, 1750.

Os dignum æterno nitidum quod fulgeat auro,
Si mallet laudare Deum, cui ſordida monſtra
Prætulit, et liquidam temeravit crimine vocem. PRUDENT.

A golden ſtatue ſuch a wit might claim,
Had God and virtue rais'd the noble flame;
But ah! how lewd a ſubject has he ſung,
What vile obſcenity profanes his tongue. F. LEWIS.

AMONG thoſe, whoſe hopes of diſtinction, or riches, ariſe from an opinion of their intellectual attainments, it has been, from age to age, an eſtabliſhed cuſtom to complain of the ingratitude of mankind to their inſtructors, and the diſcouragement which men of genius and ſtudy ſuffer from avarice and ignorance, from the prevalence of falſe taſte, and the encroachment of barbarity.

Men are moſt powerfully affected by thoſe evils which themſelves feel, or which appear before their own eyes; and as there has never been a time of ſuch general felicity, but that many have failed to obtain the rewards to which they had, in their own judgment, a juſt claim, ſome offended writer has always declaimed, in the rage of diſappointment, againſt his age or nation; nor is there one who has not fallen upon times more unfavourable to learning than any former century, or who does not wiſh, that he had been reſerved in the inſenſibility of non-exiſtence to ſome happier hour, when literary merit ſhall no longer be deſpiſed, and the gifts and careſſes of

mankind ſhall recompenſe the toils of ſtudy, and add luſtre to the charms of wit.

Many of theſe clamours are undoubtedly to be conſidered only as the burſts of pride never to be ſatisfied, as the prattle of affectation mimicking diſtreſſes unfelt, or as the common-places of vanity ſolicitous for ſplendour of ſentences, and acuteneſs of remark. Yet it cannot be denied that frequent diſcontent muſt proceed from frequent hardſhips, and though it is evident, that not more than one age or people can deſerve the cenſure of being more averſe from learning than any other, yet at all times knowledge muſt have encountered impediments, and wit been mortified with contempt, or haraſſed with perſecution.

It is not neceſſary, however, to join immediately in the outcry, or to condemn mankind as pleaſed with ignorance, or always envious of ſuperior abilities. The miſeries of the learned have been related by themſelves, and ſince they have not been found exempt from that partiality with which men look upon their own actions and ſufferings, we may conclude that they have not forgotten to deck their cauſe with the brighteſt ornaments, and ſtrongeſt colours. The logician collected all his ſubtilties when they were to be employed in his own defence; and the maſter of rhetorick exerted againſt his adverſary all the arts by which hatred is embittered, and indignation inflamed.

To believe no man in his own cauſe, is the ſtanding and perpetual rule of diſtributive juſtice. Since therefore, in the controverſy between the learned and their enemies, we have only the pleas of one party,

of the party more able to delude our underſtandings, and engage our paſſions, we muſt determine our opinion by facts uncontested, and evidences on each ſide allowed to be genuine.

By this procedure, I know not whether the ſtudents will find their cauſe promoted, or the compaſſion which they expect much increaſed. Let their conduct be impartially ſurveyed; let them be allowed no longer to direct attention at their pleaſure, by expatiating on their own deſerts; let neither the dignity of knowledge overawe the judgment, nor the graces of elegance ſeduce it. It will then, perhaps, be found, that they were not able to produce claims to kinder treatment, but provoked the calamities which they ſuffered, and ſeldom wanted friends, but when they wanted virtue.

That few men, celebrated for theoretick wiſdom, live with conformity to their precepts, muſt be readily confeſſed; and we cannot wonder that the indignation of mankind riſes with great vehemence againſt thoſe, who neglect the duties which they appear to know with ſo ſtrong conviction the neceſſity of performing. Yet ſince no man has power of acting equal to that of thinking, I know not whether the ſpeculatiſt may not ſometimes incur cenſures too ſevere, and by thoſe, who form ideas of his life from their knowledge of his books, be conſidered as worſe than others, only becauſe he was expected to be better.

He, by whoſe writings the heart is rectified, the appetites counteracted, and the paſſions repreſſed, may be conſidered as not unprofitable to the great republick of humanity, even though his behaviour ſhould

ſhould not always exemplify his rules. His inſtructions may diffuſe their influence to regions, in which it will not be inquired, whether the author be *albus an ater*, good or bad; to times, when all his faults and all his follies ſhall be loſt in forgetfulneſs, among things of no concern or importance to the world; and he may kindle in thouſands and ten thouſands that flame which burnt but dimly in himſelf, through the fumes of paſſion, or the damps of cowardice. The vicious moraliſt may be conſidered as a taper, by which we are lighted through the labyrinth of complicated paſſions, he extends his radiance further than his heat, and guides all that are within view, but burns only thoſe who make too near approaches.

Yet ſince good or harm muſt be received for the moſt part from thoſe to whom we are familiarly known, he whoſe vices overpower his virtues, in the compaſs to which his vices can extend, has no reaſon to complain that he meets not with affection or veneration, when thoſe with whom he paſſes his life are more corrupted by his practice than enlightened by his ideas. Admiration begins where acquaintance ceaſes; and his favourers are diſtant, but his enemies at hand.

Yet many have dared to boaſt of neglected merit, and to challenge their age for cruelty and folly, of whom it cannot be alleged that they have endeavoured to increaſe the wiſdom or virtue of their readers. They have been at once profligate in their lives, and licentious in their compoſitions; have not only forſaken the paths of virtue, but attempted to lure others after them. They have ſmoothed the road of perdition, covered with flowers the thorns of

guilt, and taught temptation ſweeter notes, ſofter blandiſhments, and ſtronger allurements.

It has been apparently the ſettled purpoſe of ſome writers, whoſe powers and acquiſitions place them high in the rank of literature, to ſet faſhion on the ſide of wickedneſs; to recommend debauchery and lewdneſs, by aſſociating them with qualities moſt likely to dazzle the diſcernment, and attract the affections; and to ſhow innocence and goodneſs with ſuch attendant weakneſſes as neceſſarily expoſe them to contempt and deriſion.

Such naturally found intimates among the corrupt, the thoughtleſs, and the intemperate; paſſed their lives amidſt the levities of ſportive idleneſs, or the warm profeſſions of drunken friendſhip; and fed their hopes with the promiſes of wretches, whom their precepts had taught to ſcoff at truth. But when fools had laughed away their ſprightlineſs, and the languors of exceſs could no longer be relieved, they ſaw their protectors hourly drop away, and wondered and ſtormed to find themſelves abandoned. Whether their companions perſiſted in wickedneſs, or returned to virtue, they were left equally without aſſiſtance; for debauchery is ſelfiſh and negligent, and from virtue the virtuous only can expect regard.

It is ſaid by *Florus* of *Catiline*, who died in the midſt of ſlaughtered enemies, that *his death had been illuſtrious, had it been ſuffered for his country.* Of the wits who have languiſhed away life under the preſſures of poverty, or in the reſtleſſneſs of ſuſpenſe, careſſed and rejected, flattered and deſpiſed, as they were of more or leſs uſe to thoſe who ſtiled them-

ſelves

ſelves their patrons, it might be obſerved, that their miſeries would enforce compaſſion, had they been brought upon them by honeſty and religion.

The wickedneſs of a looſe or profane author is more atrocious than that of the giddy libertine, or drunken raviſher, not only becauſe it extends its effects wider, as a peſtilence that taints the air is more deſtructive than poiſon infuſed in a draught, but becauſe it is committed with cool deliberation. By the inſtantaneous violence of deſire, a good man may ſometimes be ſurpriſed before reflection can come to his reſcue; when the appetites have ſtrengthened their influence by habit, they are not eaſily reſiſted or ſuppreſſed; but for the frigid villany of ſtudious lewdneſs, for the calm malignity of laboured impiety, what apology can be invented? What puniſhment can be adequate to the crime of him who retires to ſolitudes for the refinement of debauchery; who tortures his fancy, and ranſacks his memory, only that he may leave the world leſs virtuous than he found it; that he may intercept the hopes of the riſing generation; and ſpread ſnares for the ſoul with more dexterity?

What were their motives, or what their excuſes, is below the dignity of reaſon to examine. If having extinguiſhed in themſelves the diſtinction of right and wrong, they were inſenſible of the miſchief which they promoted, they deſerved to be hunted down by the general compact, as no longer partaking of ſocial nature; if influenced by the corruption of patrons, or readers, they ſacrificed their own convictions to vanity or intereſt, they were to be abhorred with more acrimony than he that murders

ders for pay; ſince they committed greater crimes without greater temptations.

Of him, to whom much is given, much ſhall be required. Thoſe, whom God has favoured with ſuperior faculties, and made eminent for quickneſs of intuition, and accuracy of diſtinctions, will certainly be regarded as culpable in his eye, for defects and deviations which, in ſouls leſs enlightened, may be guiltleſs. But, ſurely, none can think without horror on that man's condition, who has been more wicked in proportion as he had more means of excelling in virtue, and uſed the light imparted from heaven only to embelliſh folly, and ſhed luſtre upon crimes.

NUMB. 78. SATURDAY, *December* 15, 1750.

——— *Mors ſola fatetur*
Quantula ſint hominum corpuſcula. JUV.

Death only this myſterious truth unfolds,
The mighty ſoul how ſmall a body holds. DRYDEN.

CORPORAL ſenſation is known to depend ſo much upon novelty, that cuſtom takes away from many things their power of giving pleaſure or pain. Thus a new dreſs becomes eaſy by wearing it, and the palate is reconciled by degrees to diſhes which at firſt diſguſted it. That by long habit of carrying a burden, we loſe, in great part, our ſenſibility of its weight, any man may be convinced by putting on for an hour the armour of our anceſtors; for he will

will ſcarcely believe that men would have had much inclination to marches and battles, encumbered and oppreſſed, as he will find himſelf, with the ancient panoply. Yet the heroes that overrun regions, and ſtormed towns in iron accoutrements, he knows not to have been bigger, and has no reaſon to imagine them ſtronger than the preſent race of men; he therefore muſt conclude, that their peculiar powers were conferred only by peculiar habits, and that their familiarity with the dreſs of war enabled them to move in it with eaſe, vigour, and agility.

Yet it ſeems to be the condition of our preſent ſtate, that pain ſhould be more fixed and permanent than pleaſure. Uneaſineſs gives way by ſlow degrees, and is long before it quits its poſſeſſion of the ſenſory; but all our gratifications are volatile, vagrant, and eaſily diſſipated. The fragrance of the jeſſamine bower is loſt after the enjoyment of a few moments, and the *Indian* wanders among his native ſpices without any ſenſe of their exhalations. It is, indeed, not neceſſary to ſhew by many inſtances what all mankind confeſs, by an inceſſant call for variety, and reſtleſs purſuit of enjoyments, which they value only becauſe unpoſſeſſed.

Something ſimilar, or analogous, may be obſerved in effects produced immediately upon the mind; nothing can ſtrongly ſtrike or affect us, but what is rare or ſudden. The moſt important events, when they become familiar, are no longer conſidered with wonder or ſolicitude, and that which at firſt filled up our whole attention, and left no place for any other thought, is ſoon thruſt aſide into ſome remote repoſitory of the mind, and lies among other lumber of the

the memory, overlooked and neglected. Thus far the mind resembles the body, but here the similitude is at an end.

The manner in which external force acts upon the body is very little subject to the regulation of the will; no man can at pleasure obtund or invigorate his senses, prolong the agency of any impulse, or continue the presence of any image traced upon the eye, or any sound infused into the ear. But our ideas are more subject to choice; we can call them before us, and command their stay, we can facilitate and promote their recurrence, we can either repress their intrusion, or hasten their retreat. It is therefore the business of wisdom and virtue, to select among numberless objects striving for our notice, such as may enable us to exalt our reason, extend our views, and secure our happiness. But this choice is to be made with very little regard to rareness or frequency; for nothing is valuable merely because it is either rare or common, but because it is adapted to some useful purpose, and enables us to supply some deficieney of our nature.

Milton has judiciously represented the father of mankind, as seized with horror and astonishment at the sight of death, exhibited to him on the mount of vision. For surely, nothing can so much disturb the passions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the disruption of his union with visible nature; a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him; a change not only of the place, but the manner of his being; an entrance into a state not simply which he knows not, but which perhaps he has not faculties to know; an immediate and perceptible communi-

munication with the ſupreme Being, and, what is above all diſtreſsful and alarming, the final ſentence, and unalterable allotment.

Yet we to whom the ſhortneſs of life has given frequent occaſions of contemplating mortality, can, without emotion, ſee generations of men paſs away, and are at leiſure to eſtabliſh modes of ſorrow, and adjuſt the ceremonial of death. We can look upon funeral pomp as a common ſpectacle in which we have no concern, and turn away from it to trifles and amuſements, without dejection of look, or inquietude of heart.

It is, indeed, apparent from the conſtitution of the world, that there muſt be a time for other thoughts; and a perpetual meditation upon the laſt hour, however it may become the ſolitude of a monaſtery, is inconſiſtent with many duties of common life. But ſurely the remembrance of death ought to predominate in our minds, as an habitual and ſettled principle, always operating, though not always perceived; and our attention ſhould ſeldom wander ſo far from our own condition, as not to be recalled and fixed by ſight of an event, which muſt ſoon, we know not how ſoon, happen likewiſe to ourſelves, and of which, though we cannot appoint the time, we may ſecure the conſequence.

Every inſtance of death may juſtly awaken our fears and quicken our vigilance, but its frequency ſo much weakens its effect, that we are ſeldom alarmed unleſs ſome cloſe connexion is broken, ſome ſcheme fruſtrated, or ſome hope defeated. Many therefore ſeem to paſs on from youth to decrepitude without any reflection on the end of life, becauſe they

are wholly involved within themſelves, and look on others only as inhabitants of the common earth, without any expectation of receiving good, or intention of beſtowing it.

Events, of which we confeſs the importance, excite little ſenſibility, unleſs they affect us more nearly than as ſharers in the common intereſt of mankind; that deſire which every man feels of being remembered and lamented, is often mortified when we remark how little concern is cauſed by the eternal departure even of thoſe who have paſſed their lives with publick honours, and been diſtinguiſhed by extraordinary performances. It is not poſſible to be regarded with tenderneſs except by a few. That merit which gives greatneſs and renown, diffuſes its influence to a wide compaſs, but acts weakly on every ſingle breaſt; it is placed at a diſtance from common ſpectators, and ſhines like one of the remote ſtars, of which the light reaches us, but not the heat. The wit, the hero, the philoſopher, whom their tempers or their fortunes have hindered from intimate relations, die, without any other effect than that of adding a new topick to the converſation of the day. They impreſs none with any freſh conviction of the fragility of our nature, becauſe none had any particular intereſt in their lives, or was united to them by a reciprocation of benefits and endearments.

Thus it often happens, that thoſe who in their lives were applauded and admired, are laid at laſt in the ground without the common honour of a ſtone; becauſe by thoſe excellencies with which many were delighted, none had been obliged, and, though

though they had many to celebrate they had none to love them.

Cuſtom ſo far regulates the ſentiments, at leaſt of common minds, that I believe men may be generally obſerved to grow leſs tender as they advance in age. He, who, when life was new, melted at the loſs of every companion, can look in time, without concern, upon the grave into which his laſt friend was thrown, and into which himſelf is ready to fall; not that he is more willing to die than formerly, but that he is more familiar to the death of others, and therefore is not alarmed ſo far as to conſider how much nearer he approaches to his end. But this is to ſubmit tamely to the tyranny of accident, and to ſuffer our reaſon to lie uſeleſs. Every funeral may juſtly be conſidered as a ſummons to prepare for that ſtate, into which it ſhews us that we muſt ſometime enter; and the ſummons is more loud and piercing, as the event of which it warns us is at leſs diſtance. To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to ſleep on our poſt at a ſiege, but to omit it in old age, is to ſleep at an attack.

It has always appeared to me one of the moſt ſtriking paſſages in the viſions of *Quevedo*, which ſtigmatiſes thoſe as fools who complain that they failed of happineſs by ſudden death. "How," ſays he, "can death be ſudden to a being who always knew "that he muſt die, and that the time of his death was "uncertain?"

Since buſineſs and gaiety are always drawing our attention away from a future ſtate, ſome admonition is frequently neceſſary to recal it to our minds, and what can more properly renew the impreſſion than

the

the examples of mortality which every day ſupplies? The great incentive to virtue is the reflection that we muſt die; it will therefore be uſeful to accuſtom ourſelves, whenever we ſee a funeral, to conſider how ſoon we may be added to the number of thoſe whoſe probation is paſt, and whoſe happineſs or miſery ſhall endure for ever.

NUMB. 79. TUESDAY, *December* 18, 1750.

Tam ſæpe noſtrum decipi Fabullum, quid
Miraris, Aule? Semper bonus homo tiro eſt. MART.

You wonder I've ſo little wit,
Friend *John*, ſo often to be bit,—
None better guard againſt a cheat
Than he who is a knave complete. F. LEWIS.

SUSPICION, however neceſſary it may be to our ſafe paſſage through ways beſet on all ſides by fraud and malice, has been always conſidered, when it exceeds the common meaſures, as a token of depravity and corruption; and a *Greek* writer of ſentences has laid down as a ſtanding maxim, that *he who believes not another on his oath, knows himſelf to be perjured.*

We can form our opinions of that which we know not, only by placing it in compariſon with ſomething that we know; whoever therefore is over-run with ſuſpicion, and detects artifice and ſtratagem in every propoſal, muſt either have learned by experience or obſervation the wickedneſs of mankind, and

been taught to avoid fraud by having often ſuffered or ſeen treachery, or he muſt derive his judgment from the conſciouſneſs of his own diſpoſition, and impute to others the ſame inclinations, which he feels predominant in himſelf.

To learn caution by turning our eyes upon life, and obſerving the arts by which negligence is ſurpriſed, timidity overborne, and credulity amuſed, requires either great latitude of converſe and long acquaintance with buſineſs, or uncommon activity of vigilance, and acuteneſs of penetration. When therefore a young man, not diſtinguiſhed by vigour of intellect, comes into the world full of ſcruples and diffidence; makes a bargain with many proviſional limitations; heſitates in his anſwer to a common queſtion, leſt more ſhould be intended than he can immediately diſcover; has a long reach in detecting the projects of his acquaintance; conſiders every careſs as an act of hypocriſy, and feels neither gratitude nor affection from the tenderneſs of his friends, becauſe he believes no one to have any real tenderneſs but for himſelf; whatever expectations this early ſagacity may raiſe of his future eminence or riches, I can ſeldom forbear to conſider him as a wretch incapable of generoſity or benevolence, as a villain early completed beyond the need of common opportunities and gradual temptations.

Upon men of this claſs inſtruction and admonition are generally thrown away, becauſe they conſider artifice and deceit as proofs of underſtanding; they are miſled at the ſame time by the two great ſeducers of the world, vanity and intereſt, and not only look upon thoſe who act with openneſs and con-

fidence, as condemned by their principles to obſcurity and want, but as contemptible for narrowneſs of comprehenſion, ſhortneſs of views, and ſlowneſs of contrivance.

The world has been long amuſed with the mention of policy in publick tranſactions, and of art in private affairs; they have been conſidered as the effects of great qualities, and as unattainable by men of the common level: yet I have not found many performances either of art or policy, that required ſuch ſtupendous efforts of intellect, or might not have been effected by falſehood and impudence, without the aſſiſtance of any other powers. To profeſs what he does not mean, to promiſe what he cannot perform, to flatter ambition with proſpects of promotion, and miſery with hopes of relief, to ſooth pride with appearances of ſubmiſſion, and appeaſe enmity by blandiſhments and bribes, can ſurely imply nothing more or greater than a mind devoted wholly to its own purpoſes, a face that cannot bluſh, and a heart that cannot feel.

Theſe practices are ſo mean and baſe, that he who finds in himſelf no tendency to uſe them, cannot eaſily believe that they are conſidered by others with leſs deteſtation; he therefore ſuffers himſelf to ſlumber in falſe ſecurity, and becomes a prey to thoſe who applaud their own ſubtilty, becauſe they know how to ſteal upon his ſleep, and exult in the ſucceſs which they could never have obtained, had they not attempted a man better than themſelves, who was hindered from obviating their ſtratagems, not by folly, but by innocence.

Suſpicion

Suſpicion is, indeed, a temper ſo uneaſy and reſtleſs, that it is very juſtly appointed the concomitant of guilt. It is ſaid, that no torture is equal to the inhibition of ſleep long continued; a pain, to which the ſtate of that man bears a very exact analogy, who dares never give reſt to his vigilance and circumſpection, but conſiders himſelf as ſurrounded by ſecret foes, and fears to intruſt his children, or his friend, with the ſecret that throbs in his breaſt, and the anxieties that break into his face. To avoid, at this expence, thoſe evils to which eaſineſs and friendſhip might have expoſed him, is ſurely to buy ſafety at too dear a rate, and in the language of the *Roman* ſatiriſt, to ſave life by loſing all for which a wiſe man would live.

When in the diet of the *German* empire, as *Camerarius* relates, the princes were once diſplaying their felicity, and each boaſting the advantages of his own dominions, one who poſſeſſed a country not remarkable for the grandeur of its cities, or the fertility of its ſoil, roſe to ſpeak, and the reſt liſtened between pity and contempt, till he declared, in honour of his territories, that he could travel through them without a guard, and if he was weary, ſleep in ſafety upon the lap of the firſt man whom he ſhould meet; a commendation which would have been ill exchanged for the boaſt of palaces, paſtures, or ſtreams.

Suſpicion is not leſs an enemy to virtue than to happineſs: he that is already corrupt is naturally ſuſpicious, and he that becomes ſuſpicious will quickly be corrupt. It is too common for us to learn the frauds by which ourſelves have ſuffered; men who are once perſuaded that deceit will be employed

againſt them, ſometimes think the ſame arts juſtified by the neceſſity of defence. Even they whoſe virtue is too well eſtabliſhed to give way to example, or be ſhaken by ſophiſtry, muſt yet feel their love of mankind diminiſhed with their eſteem, and grow leſs zealous for the happineſs of thoſe by whom they imagine their own happineſs endangered.

Thus we find old age, upon which ſuſpicion has been ſtrongly impreſſed by long intercourſe with the world, inflexible and ſevere, not eaſily ſoftened by ſubmiſſion, melted by complaint, or ſubdued by ſupplication. Frequent experience of counterfeited miſeries, and diſſembled virtue, in time overcomes that diſpoſition to tenderneſs and ſympathy, which is ſo powerful in our younger years, and they that happen to petition the old for compaſſion or aſſiſtance, are doomed to languiſh without regard, and ſuffer for the crimes of men who have formerly been found undeſerving or ungrateful.

Hiſtorians are certainly chargeable with the depravation of mankind, when they relate without cenſure thoſe ſtratagems of war by which the virtues of an enemy are engaged to his deſtruction. A ſhip comes before a port, weather-beaten and ſhattered, and the crew implore the liberty of repairing their breaches, ſupplying themſelves with neceſſaries, or burying their dead. The humanity of the inhabitants inclines them to conſent, the ſtrangers enter the town with weapons concealed, fall ſuddenly upon their benefactors, deſtroy thoſe that make reſiſtance, and become maſters of the place; they return home rich with plunder, and their ſucceſs is recorded to encourage imitation.

But

But ſurely war has its laws, and ought to be conducted with ſome regard to the univerſal intereſt of man. Thoſe may juſtly be purſued as enemies to the community of nature, who ſuffer hoſtility to vacate the unalterable laws of right, and purſue their private advantage by means, which, if once eſtabliſhed, muſt deſtroy kindneſs, cut off from every man all hopes of aſſiſtance from another, and fill the world with perpetual ſuſpicion and implacable malevolence. Whatever is thus gained ought to be reſtored, and thoſe who have conquered by ſuch treachery may be juſtly denied the protection of their native country.

Whoever commits a fraud is guilty not only of the particular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the diminution of that confidence which conſtitutes not only the eaſe but the exiſtence of ſociety. He that ſuffers by impoſture has too often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is neceſſary not to invite robbery by ſupineneſs, ſo it is our duty not to ſuppreſs tenderneſs by ſuſpicion; it is better to ſuffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be ſometimes cheated than not to truſt.

NUMB. 80. SATURDAY, *December* 22, 1750.

Vides ut altâ ſtet nive candidum
Soracte, *nec jam ſuſtineant onus*
Silvæ laborantes —— HOR.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height,
Made higher with new mounts of ſnow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppreſs the lab'ring woods below. DRYDEN.

AS providence has made the human ſoul an active being, always impatient for novelty, and ſtruggling for ſomething yet unenjoyed with unwearied progreſſion, the world ſeems to have been eminently adapted to this diſpoſition of the mind; it is formed to raiſe expectations by conſtant viciſſitudes, and to obviate ſatiety by perpetual change.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we find ſomething to revive our curioſity, and engage our attention. In the duſk of the morning we watch the riſing of the ſun, and ſee the day diverſify the clouds, and open new proſpects in its gradual advance. After a few hours, we ſee the ſhades lengthen, and the light decline, till the ſky is reſigned to a multitude of ſhining orbs different from each other in magnitude and ſplendour. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it; the woods offer their ſhades, and the fields their harveſts; the hill flatters with an extenſive view, and the valley invites with ſhelter, fragrance, and flowers.

The poets have numbered among the felicities of the golden age, an exemption from the change of

ſeaſons, and a perpetuity of ſpring; but I am not certain that in this ſtate of imaginary happineſs they have made ſufficient proviſion for that inſatiable demand of new gratifications, which ſeems particularly to characterize the nature of man. Our ſenſe of delight is in a great meaſure comparative, and ariſes at once from the ſenſations which we feel, and thoſe which we remember: Thus eaſe after torment is pleaſure for a time, and we are very agreeably recreated, when the body, chilled with the weather, is gradually recovering its natural tepidity; but the joy ceaſes when we have forgot the cold, we muſt fall below eaſe again, if we deſire to riſe above it, and purchaſe new felicity by voluntary pain. It is therefore not unlikely, that however the fancy may be amuſed with the deſcription of regions in which no wind is heard but the gentle zephyr, and no ſcenes are diſplayed but vallies enamelled with unfading flowers, and woods waving their perennial verdure, we ſhould ſoon grow weary of uniformity, find our thoughts languiſh for want of other ſubjects, call on heaven for our wonted round of ſeaſons, and think ourſelves liberally recompenſed for the inconveniencies of ſummer and winter, by new perceptions of the calmneſs and mildneſs of the intermediate variations.

Every ſeaſon has its particular power of ſtriking the mind. The nakedneſs and aſperity of the wintry world always fills the beholder with penſive and profound aſtoniſhment; as the variety of the ſcene is leſſened, its grandeur is increaſed; and the mind is ſwelled at once by the mingled ideas of the preſent and the paſt, of the beauties which have vaniſhed

from the eyes, and the waſte and deſolation that are now before them.

It is obſerved by *Milton*, that he who neglects to viſit the country in ſpring, and rejects the pleaſures that are then in their firſt bloom and fragrance, is guilty of *ſullenneſs againſt nature*. If we allot different duties to different ſeaſons, he may be charged with equal diſobedience to the voice of nature, who looks on the bleak hills and leafleſs woods, without ſerioufneſs and awe. Spring is the ſeaſon of gaiety, and winter of terror; in ſpring the heart of tranquillity dances to the melody of the groves, and the eye of benevolence ſparkles at the ſight of happineſs and plenty: In the winter, compaſſion melts at univerſal calamity, and the tear of ſoftneſs ſtarts at the wailings of hunger, and the cries of the creation in diſtreſs.

Few minds have much inclination to indulge heavineſs and ſorrow, nor do I recommend them beyond the degree neceſſary to maintain in its full vigour that habitual ſympathy and tenderneſs, which, in a world of ſo much miſery, is neceſſary to the ready diſcharge of our moſt important duties. The winter therefore is generally celebrated as the proper ſeaſon for domeſtick merriment and gaiety. We are ſeldom invited by the votaries of pleaſure to look abroad for any other purpoſe, than that we may ſhrink back with more ſatisfaction to our coverts, and when we have heard the howl of the tempeſt, and felt the gripe of the froſt, congratulate each other with more gladneſs upon a cloſe room, an eaſy chair, a large fire, and a ſmoking dinner.

Winter brings natural inducements to jollity and converſation. Differences, we know, are never ſo ef-

fectually

fectually laid aſleep, as by ſome common calamity: An enemy unites all to whom he threatens danger. The rigour of winter brings generally to the ſame fire-ſide thoſe, who, by the oppoſition of inclinations, or difference of employment, moved in various directions through the other parts of the year; and when they have met, and find it their mutual intereſt to remain together, they endear each other by mutual compliances, and often wiſh for the continuance of the ſocial ſeaſon, with all its bleakneſs and all its ſeverities.

To the men of ſtudy and imagination the winter is generally the chief time of labour. Gloom and ſilence produce compoſure of mind, and concentration of ideas; and the privation of external pleaſure naturally cauſes an effort to find entertainment within. This is the time in which thoſe, whom literature enables to find amuſements for themſelves, have more than common convictions of their own happineſs. When they are condemned by the elements to retirement, and debarred from moſt of the diverſions which are called in to aſſiſt the flight of time, they can find new ſubjects of enquiry, and preſerve themſelves from that wearineſs which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind.

It cannot indeed be expected of all to be poets and philoſophers; it is neceſſary that the greater part of mankind ſhould be employed in the minute buſineſs of common life; minute, indeed, not if we conſider its influence upon our happineſs, but if we reſpect the abilities requiſite to conduct it. Theſe muſt neceſſarily be more dependent on accident for the means of ſpending agreeably thoſe hours which their

occupations

occupations leave unengaged, or nature obliges them to allow to relaxation. Yet even on theſe I would willingly impreſs ſuch a ſenſe of the value of time, as may incline them to find out for their careleſs hours amuſements of more uſe and dignity than the common games, which not only weary the mind without improving it, but ſtrengthen the paſſions of envy and avarice, and often lead to fraud and to profuſion, to corruption and to ruin. It is unworthy of a reaſonable being to ſpend any of the little time allotted us, without ſome tendency, either direct or oblique, to the end of our exiſtence. And though every moment cannot be laid out on the formal and regular improvement of our knowledge, or in the ſtated practice of a moral or religious duty, yet none ſhould be ſo ſpent as to exclude wiſdom or virtue, or paſs without poſſibility of qualifying us more or leſs for the better employment of thoſe which are to come.

It is ſcarcely poſſible to paſs an hour in honeſt converſation, without being able when we riſe from it, to pleaſe ourſelves with having given or received ſome advantages; but a man may ſhuffle cards, or rattle dice, from noon to midnight, without tracing any new idea in his mind, or being able to recollect the day by any other token than his gain or loſs, and a confuſed remembrance of agitated paſſions, and clamorous altercations.

However, as experience is of more weight than precept, any of my readers who are contriving how to ſpend the dreary months before them, may conſider which of their paſt amuſements fills them now with the greateſt ſatisfaction, and reſolve to repeat thoſe gratifications of which the pleaſure is moſt durable.

NUMB. 81. TUESDAY, *December* 25, 1750.

Difcite Juftitiam moniti——— VIRG.

Hear, and be juft.

AMONG queftions which have been difcuffed without any approach to decifion, may be numbered the precedency or fuperior excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnifhed a fubject of difpute to men whofe leifure fent them out into the intellectual world in fearch of employment, and who have, perhaps, been fometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for its advancement, and diligence in its celebration.

The intricacy of this difpute may be alleged as a proof of that tendernefs for mankind which providence has, I think, univerfally difplayed, by making attainments eafy in proportion as they are neceffary. That all the duties of morality ought to be practifed, is without difficulty difcoverable, becaufe ignorance or uncertainty would immediately involve the world in confufion and diftrefs; but which duty ought to be moft efteemed, we may continue to debate, without inconvenience, fo all be diligently performed as there is opportunity or need: for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happinefs of mankind; and controverfies, merely fpeculative, are of fmall importance in themfelves, however they may have fometimes heated a difputant, or provoked a faction.

Of the divine author of our religion it is impoſſible to peruſe the evangelical hiſtories, without obſerving how little he favoured the vanity of inquiſitiveneſs; how much more rarely he condeſcended to ſatisfy curioſity, than to relieve diſtreſs; and how much he deſired that his followers ſhould rather excel in goodneſs than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles, and the direction of daily conduct, without oſtentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, ſuch as well-meaning ſimplicity may readily conceive, and of which we cannot miſtake the meaning, but when we are afraid to find it.

The meaſure of juſtice preſcribed to us, in our tranſactions with others, is remarkably clear and comprehenſive: *Whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do unto you, even ſo do unto them.* A law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjuſted, as far as the private conſcience requires to be informed; a law, of which every man may find the expoſition in his own breaſt, and which may always be obſerved without any other qualifications than honeſty of intention, and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, ſome ſons of ſophiſtry have been ſubtle enough to throw miſts, which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this univerſal principle, they have enquired whether a man, conſcious to himſelf of unreaſonable wiſhes, be bound to gratify them in another. But ſurely there needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the deſires, which are to be conſidered by us as the meaſure of right, muſt be ſuch as we approve, and that we ought to pay no regard to thoſe ex-

pectations

pectations in others which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it our duty to reſiſt and ſuppreſs.

One of the moſt celebrated caſes which have been produced as requiring ſome ſkill in the direction of conſcience to adapt them to this great rule, is that of a criminal aſking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know, that if he was in the ſtate of the ſuppliant, he ſhould deſire that pardon which he now denies. The difficulty of this ſophiſm will vaniſh, if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one ſide the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magiſtrate is only the miniſter, and by which he is intruſted with the publick ſafety. The magiſtrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the truſt with which he is inveſted, gives away what is not his own, and, apparently, does to others what he would not that others ſhould do to him. Even the community, whoſe right is ſtill greater to arbitrary grants of mercy, is bound by thoſe laws which regard the great republick of mankind, and cannot juſtify ſuch forbearance as may promote wickedneſs, and leſſen the general confidence and ſecurity in which all have an equal intereſt, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reaſon the ſtate has not a right to erect a general ſanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to ſuch as have forfeited their lives by crimes againſt the laws of common morality equally acknowledged by all nations, becauſe no people can, without infraction of the univerſal league of ſocial

beings,

beings, incite, by profpects of impunity and fafety, thofe practices in another dominion, which they would themfelves punifh in their own.

One occafion of uncertainty and hefitation, in thofe by whom this great rule has been commented and dilated, is the confufion of what the exacter cafuifts are careful to diftinguifh, *debts of juftice* and *debts of charity*. The immediate and primary intention of this precept, is to eftablifh a rule of juftice, and I know not whether invention, or fophiftry, can ftart a fingle difficulty to retard its application, when it is thus expreffed and explained, *let every man allow the claim of right in another, which he fhould think himfelf entitled to make in the like circumftances.*

The difcharge of the *debts of charity*, or duties which we owe to others, not merely as required by juftice, but as dictated by benevolence, admits in its own nature greater complication of circumftances, and greater latitude of choice. Juftice is indifpenfably and univerfally neceffary, and what is neceffary muft always be limited, uniform, and diftinct. But beneficence, though in general equally enjoined by our religion, and equally needful to the conciliation of the divine favour, is yet, for the moft part, with regard to its fingle acts, elective and voluntary. We may certainly, without injury to our fellow-beings, allow in the diftribution of kindnefs fomething to our affections, and change the meafure of our liberality, according to our opinions and profpects, our hopes and fears. This rule therefore is not equally determinate and abfolute with refpect to offices of kindnefs, and acts of liberality, becaufe liberality

[library stamp]

and kindneſs, abſolutely determined, would loſe their nature; for how could we be called tender, or charitable, for giving that which we are poſitively forbidden to withhold?

Yet even in adjuſting the extent of our beneficence no other meaſure can be taken than this precept affords us, for we can only know what others ſuffer or want, by conſidering how we ſhould be affected in the ſame ſtate; nor can we proportion our aſſiſtance by any other rule than that of doing what we ſhould then expect from others. It indeed generally happens that the giver and receiver differ in their opinions of generoſity; the ſame partiality to his own intereſt inclines one to large expectations, and the other to ſparing diſtributions. Perhaps the infirmity of human nature will ſcarcely ſuffer a man groaning under the preſſure of diſtreſs, to judge rightly of the kindneſs of his friends, or think they have done enough till his deliverance is completed; not therefore what we might wiſh, but what we could demand from others, we are obliged to grant, ſince, though we can eaſily know how much we might claim, it is impoſſible to determine what we ſhould hope.

But in all enquiries concerning the practice of voluntary and occaſional virtues, it is ſafeſt for minds not oppreſſed with ſuperſtitious fears to determine againſt their own inclinations, and ſecure themſelves from deficiency, by doing more than they believe ſtrictly neceſſary. For of this every man may be certain, that, if he were to exchange conditions with his dependent, he ſhould expect more than, with the utmoſt exertion of his ardour, he now will pre-

vail

vail upon himſelf to perform; and when reaſon has no ſettled rule, and our paſſions are ſtriving to miſlead us, it is ſurely the part of a wiſe man to err on the ſide of ſafety.

NUMB. 82. SATURDAY, *December* 29, 1750.

Omnia Caſtor *emit, ſic fiet ut omnia vendat.* MART.

Who buys without diſcretion, buys to ſell.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT will not be neceſſary to ſolicit your good-will by any formal preface, when I have informed you, that I have long been known as the moſt laborious and zealous virtuoſo that the preſent age has had the honour of producing, and that inconveniencies have been brought upon me by an unextinguiſhable ardour of curioſity, and an unſhaken perſeverance in the acquiſition of the productions of art and nature.

It was obſerved, from my entrance into the world, that I had ſomething uncommon in my diſpoſition, and that there appeared in me very early tokens of ſuperior genius. I was always an enemy to trifles; the playthings which my mother beſtowed upon me I immediately broke, that I might diſcover the method of their ſtructure, and the cauſes of their motions; of all the toys with which children are de-

lighted I valued only my coral, and as ſoon as I could ſpeak, aſked, like *Piereſc*, innumerable queſtions which the maids about me could not reſolve. As I grew older I was more thoughtful and ſerious, and inſtead of amuſing myſelf with puerile diverſions, made collections of natural rarities, and never walked into the fields without bringing home ſtones of remarkable forms, or inſects of ſome uncommon ſpecies. I never entered an old houſe, from which I did not take away the painted glaſs, and often lamented that I was not one of that happy generation who demoliſhed the convents and monaſteries, and broke windows by law.

Being thus early poſſeſſed by a taſte for ſolid knowledge, I paſſed my youth with very little diſturbance from paſſions and appetites, and having no pleaſure in the company of boys and girls, who talked of plays, politicks, faſhions, or love, I carried on my enquiries with inceſſant diligence, and had amaſſed more ſtones, moſſes, and ſhells, than are to be found in many celebrated collections, at an age in which the greateſt part of young men are ſtudying under tutors, or endeavouring to recommend themſelves to notice by their dreſs, their air, and their levities.

When I was two and twenty years old, I became, by the death of my father, poſſeſſed of a ſmall eſtate in land, with a very large ſum of money in the publick funds, and muſt confeſs that I did not much lament him, for he was a man of mean parts, bent rather upon growing rich than wiſe. He once fretted at the expence of only ten ſhillings, which he happened to overhear me offering for the

ſting of a hornet, though it was a cold moiſt ſummer, in which very few hornets had been ſeen. He often recommended to me the ſtudy of phyſick, in which, ſaid he, you may at once gratify your curioſity after natural hiſtory, and increaſe your fortune by benefiting mankind. I heard him, Mr. *Rambler*, with pity, and as there was no proſpect of elevating a mind formed to grovel, ſuffered him to pleaſe himſelf with hoping that I ſhould ſome time follow his advice. For you know that there are men, with whom, when they have once ſettled a notion in their heads, it is to very little purpoſe to diſpute.

Being now left wholly to my own inclinations, I very ſoon enlarged the bounds of my curioſity, and contented myſelf no longer with ſuch rarities as required only judgment and induſtry, and when once found, might be had for nothing. I now turned my thoughts to *Exoticks* and *Antiques*, and became ſo well known, for my generous patronage of ingenious men, that my levee was crowded with viſitants, ſome to ſee my muſeum, and others to increaſe its treaſures, by ſelling me whatever they had brought from other countries.

I had always a contempt for that narrowneſs of conception, which contents itſelf with cultivating ſome ſingle corner of the field of ſcience; I took the whole region into my view, and wiſhed it of yet greater extent. But no man's power can be equal to his will. I was forced to proceed by ſlow degrees, and to purchaſe what chance or kindneſs happened to preſent. I did not however proceed without ſome deſign, or imitate the indiſcretion of thoſe, who begin a thouſand collections, and finiſh none. Having been

been always a lover of geography, I determined to collect the maps drawn in the rude and barbarous times, before any regular surveys, or just observations; and have, at a great expence, brought together a volume, in which, perhaps, not a single country is laid down according to its true situation, and by which, he that desires to know the errors of the ancient geographers may be amply informed.

But my ruling passion is patriotism: my chief care has been to procure the products of our own country; and as *Alfred* received the tribute of the *Welch* in wolves heads, I allowed my tenants to pay their rents in butterflies, till I had exhausted the papilionaceous tribe. I then directed them to the pursuit of other animals, and obtained, by this easy method, most of the grubs and insects, which land, air, or water can supply. I have three species of earthworms not known to the naturalists, have discovered a new ephemera, and can shew four wasps that were taken torpid in their winter quarters. I have, from my own ground, the longest blade of grass upon record, and once accepted, as a half year's rent for a field of wheat, an ear containing more grains than had been seen before upon a single stem.

One of my tenants so much neglected his own interest, as to supply me, in a whole summer, with only two horse-flies, and those of little more than the common size; and I was upon the brink of seizing for arrears, when his good fortune threw a white mole in his way, for which he was not only forgiven, but rewarded.

These, however, were petty acquisitions, and made at small expence; nor should I have ventured

to rank myſelf among the virtuoſi without better claims. I have ſuffered nothing worthy the regard of a wiſe man to eſcape my notice: I have ranſacked the old and the new world, and been equally attentive to paſt ages and the preſent. For the illuſtration of ancient hiſtory, I can ſhew a marble, of which the inſcription, though it is not now legible, appears, from ſome broken remains of the letters, to have been *Tuſcan*, and therefore probably engraved before the foundation of *Rome*. I have two pieces of porphyry found among the ruins of *Epheſus*, and three letters broken off by a learned traveller from the monuments of *Perſepolis*; a piece of ſtone which paved the *Areopagus* of *Athens*, and a plate without figures or characters, which was found at *Corinth*, and which I therefore believe to be that metal which was once valued before gold. I have ſand gathered out of the *Granicus*; a fragment of *Trajan*'s bridge over the *Danube*; ſome of the mortar which cemented the watercourſe of *Tarquin*; a horſeſhoe broken on the *Flaminian* way; and a turf with five daiſies dug from the field of *Pharſalia*.

I do not wiſh to raiſe the envy of unſucceſsful collectors, by too pompous a diſplay of my ſcientifick wealth, but cannot forbear to obſerve, that there are few regions of the globe which are not honoured with ſome memorial in my cabinets. The *Perſian* monarchs are ſaid to have boaſted the greatneſs of their empire, by being ſerved at their tables with drink from the *Ganges* and the *Danube*: I can ſhew one vial, of which the water was formerly an icicle on the crags of *Caucaſus*, and another that contains what once was ſnow on the top of *Atlas*; in a

third is dew bruſhed from a banana in the gardens of *Iſpahan*; and, in another, brine that has rolled in the Pacifick ocean. I flatter myſelf that I am writing to a man who will rejoice at the honour which my labours have procured to my country; and therefore I ſhall tell you that *Britain* can, by my care, boaſt of a ſnail that has crawled upon the wall of *China*; a humming bird which an *American* princeſs wore in her ear; the tooth of an elephant who carried the queen of *Siam*; the ſkin of an ape that was kept in the palace of the great mogul; a ribbon that adorned one of the maids of a *Turkiſh* ſultana; and a ſcymitar once wielded by a ſoldier of *Abas* the great.

In collecting antiquities of every country, I have been careful to chuſe only by intrinſick worth, and real uſefulneſs, without regard to party or opinions. I have therefore a lock of *Cromwell*'s hair in a box turned from a piece of the royal oak; and keep in the ſame drawers, ſand ſcraped from the coffin of king *Richard*, and a commiſſion ſigned by *Henry* the ſeventh. I have equal veneration for the ruff of *Elizabeth* and the ſhoe of *Mary* of *Scotland*; and ſhould loſe, with like regret, a tobacco-pipe of *Raleigh*, and a ſtirrup of king *James*. I have paid the ſame price for a glove of *Lewis*, and a thimble of queen *Mary*; for a fur cap of the *Czar*, and a boot of *Charles* of *Sweden*.

You will eaſily imagine that theſe accumulations were not made without ſome diminution of my fortune, for I was ſo well known to ſpare no coſt, that at every ſale ſome bid againſt me for hire, ſome

for ſport, and ſome for malice; and if I aſked the price of any thing, it was ſufficient to double the demand. For curioſity, trafficking thus with avarice, the wealth of *India* had not been enough; and I, by little and little, transferred all my money from the funds to my cloſet: here I was inclined to ſtop, and live upon my eſtate in literary leiſure, but the ſale of the *Harleian* collection ſhook my reſolution: I mortgaged my land and purchaſed thirty medals, which I could never find before. I have at length bought till I can buy no longer, and the cruelty of my creditors has ſeized my repoſitory; I am therefore condemned to diſperſe what the labour of an age will not reaſſemble. I ſubmit to that which cannot be oppoſed, and ſhall, in a ſhort time, declare a ſale. I have, while it is yet in my power, ſent you a pebble, picked up by *Tavernier* on the banks of the *Ganges*; for which I deſire no other recompence than that you will recommend my catalogue to the publick.

QUISQUILIUS.

NUMB. 83. TUESDAY, *January* 1, 1750.

Nisi utile est quod facias stulta est gloria. PHÆD.

All useless science is an empty boast.

THE publication of the letter in my last paper has naturally led me to the consideration of that thirst after curiosities, which often draws contempt and ridicule upon itself, but which is perhaps no otherwise blameable, than as it wants those circumstantial recommendations which add lustre even to moral excellencies, and are absolutely necessary to the grace and beauty of indifferent actions.

Learning confers so much superiority on those who possess it, that they might probably have escaped all censure had they been able to agree among themselves; but as envy and competition have divided the republick of letters into factions, they have neglected the common interest; each has called in foreign aid, and endeavoured to strengthen his own cause by the frown of power, the hiss of ignorance, and the clamour of popularity. They have all engaged in feuds, till by mutual hostilities they demolished those outworks which veneration had raised for their security, and exposed themselves to barbarians, by whom every region of science is equally laid waste.

Between men of different studies and professions, may be observed a constant reciprocation of reproaches. The collector of shells and stones, derides

the folly of him who paſtes leaves and flowers upon paper, pleaſes himſelf with colours that are perceptibly fading, and amaſſes with care what cannot be preſerved. The hunter of inſects ſtands amazed that any man can waſte his ſhort time upon lifeleſs matter, while many tribes of animals yet want their hiſtory. Every one is inclined not only to promote his own ſtudy, but to exclude all others from regard, and having heated his imagination with ſome favourite purſuit, wonders that the reſt of mankind are not ſeized with the ſame paſſion.

There are, indeed, many ſubjects of ſtudy which ſeem but remotely allied to uſeful knowledge, and of little importance to happineſs or virtue; nor is it eaſy to forbear ſome ſallies of merriment, or expreſſions of pity, when we ſee a man wrinkled with attention, and emaciated with ſolicitude, in the inveſtigation of queſtions, of which, without viſible inconvenience, the world may expire in ignorance. Yet it is dangerous to diſcourage well-intended labours, or innocent curioſity; for he who is employed in ſearches, which by any deduction of conſequences tend to the benefit of life, is ſurely laudable, in compariſon of thoſe who ſpend their time in counteracting happineſs, and filling the world with wrong and danger, confuſion and remorſe. No man can perform ſo little as not to have reaſon to congratulate himſelf on his merits, when he beholds the multitudes that live in total idleneſs, and have never yet endeavoured to be uſeful.

It is impoſſible to determine the limits of enquiry, or to foreſee what conſequences a new diſcovery may produce. He who ſuffers not his faculties to lie

torpid,

torpid, has a chance, whatever be his employment, of doing good to his fellow-creatures. The man that firſt ranged the woods in ſearch of medicinal ſprings, or climbed the mountains for ſalutary plants, has undoubtedly merited the gratitude of poſterity, how much ſoever his frequent miſcarriages might excite the ſcorn of his cotemporaries. If what appears little be univerſally deſpiſed, nothing greater can be attained, for all that is great was at firſt little, and roſe to its preſent bulk by gradual acceſſions, and accumulated labours.

Thoſe who lay out time or money in aſſembling matter for contemplation, are doubtleſs entitled to ſome degree of reſpect, though in a flight of gaiety it be eaſy to ridicule their treaſure, or in a fit of ſullenneſs to deſpiſe it. A man who thinks only on the particular object before him, goes not away much illuminated by having enjoyed the privilege of handling the tooth of a ſhark, or the paw of a white bear; yet there is nothing more worthy of admiration to a philoſophical eye, than the ſtructure of animals, by which they are qualified to ſupport life in the elements or climates to which they are appropriated; and of all natural bodies it muſt be generally confeſſed, that they exhibit evidences of infinite wiſdom, bear their teſtimony to the ſupreme reaſon, and excite in the mind new raptures of gratitude, and new incentives to piety.

To collect the productions of art, and examples of mechanical ſcience or manual ability, is unqueſtionably uſeful, even when the things themſelves are of ſmall importance, becauſe it is always advantageous to know how far the human powers have proceeded,

ceeded, and how much experience has found to be within the reach of diligence. Idleneſs and timidity often deſpair without being overcome, and forbear attempts for fear of being defeated; and we may promote the invigoration of faint endeavours, by ſhewing what has been already performed. It may ſometimes happen that the greateſt efforts of ingenuity have been exerted in trifles; yet the ſame principles and expedients may be applied to more valuable purpoſes, and the movements, which put into action machines of no uſe but to raiſe the wonder of ignorance, may be employed to drain fens, or manufacture metals, to aſſiſt the architect, or preſerve the ſailor.

For the utenſils, arms, or dreſſes of foreign nations, which make the greateſt part of many collections, I have little regard when they are valued only becauſe they are foreign, and can ſuggeſt no improvement of our own practice. Yet they are not all equally uſeleſs, nor can it be always ſafely determined, which ſhould be rejected or retained: for they may ſometimes unexpectedly contribute to the illuſtration of hiſtory, and to the knowledge of the natural commodities of the country, or of the genius and cuſtoms of its inhabitants.

Rarities there are of yet a lower rank, which owe their worth merely to accident, and which can convey no information, nor ſatisfy any rational deſire. Such are many fragments of antiquity, as urns and pieces of pavement; and things held in veneration only for having been once the property of ſome eminent perſon, as the armour of King *Henry*; or for having been uſed on ſome remarkable occaſion, as

the lantern of *Guy Faux*. The loſs or preſervation of theſe ſeems to be a thing indifferent, nor can I perceive why the poſſeſſion of them ſhould be coveted. Yet, perhaps, even this curioſity is implanted by nature; and when I find *Tully* confeſſing of himſelf, that he could not forbear at *Athens* to viſit the walks and houſes which the old philoſophers had frequented or inhabited, and recollect the reverence which every nation, civil and barbarous, has paid to the ground where merit has been buried, I am afraid to declare againſt the general voice of mankind, and am inclined to believe, that this regard, which we involuntarily pay to the meaneſt relique of a man great and illuſtrious, is intended as an incitement to labour, and an encouragement to expect the ſame renown, if it be ſought by the ſame virtues.

The virtuoſo therefore cannot be ſaid to be wholly uſeleſs; but perhaps he may be ſometimes culpable for confining himſelf to buſineſs below his genius, and loſing in petty ſpeculations, thoſe hours by which, if he had ſpent them in nobler ſtudies, he might have given new light to the intellectual world. It is never without grief, that I find a man capable of ratiocination or invention enliſting himſelf in this ſecondary claſs of learning; for when he has once diſcovered a method of gratifying his deſire of eminence by expence rather than by labour, and known the ſweets of a life bleſt at once with the eaſe of idleneſs, and the reputation of knowledge, he will not eaſily be brought to undergo again the toil of thinking, or leave his toys and trinkets for arguments and principles, arguments which require circumſpection and vigilance, and principles which

cannot

cannot be obtained but by the drudgery of meditation. He will gladly ſhut himſelf up for ever with his ſhells and medals, like the companions of *Ulyſſes*, who having taſted the fruit of *Lotos*, would not even by the hope of ſeeing their own country be tempted again to the dangers of the ſea.

> Ἀλλ' αὐτȣ βȣ́λοντο μετ' ἀνδράσι Λωτοφάγοισι,
> Λωτὸν ἐρεπτόμενοι μένεμεν νοςȣ͂τε λάθεσθαι.

> ——— Whoſo taſtes
> Inſatiate riots in the ſweet repaſts;
> Nor other home nor other care intends,
> But quits his houſe, his country, and his friends. Pope.

Collections of this kind are of uſe to the learned, as heaps of ſtones and piles of timber are neceſſary to the architect. But to dig the quarry or to ſearch the field, requires not much of any quality beyond ſtubborn perſeverance; and though genius muſt often lie unactive without this humble aſſiſtance, yet this can claim little praiſe, becauſe every man can afford it.

To mean underſtandings, it is ſufficient honour to be numbered amongſt the loweſt labourers of learning; but different abilities muſt find different taſks. To hew ſtone, would have been unworthy of *Palladio*; and to have rambled in ſearch of ſhells and flowers, had but ill ſuited with the capacity of *Newton*.

NUMB. 84. SATURDAY, *January* 5, 1751.

Cunarum fueras motor, CHARIDEME, *mearum,*
Et pueri custos, assiduusque comes.
Jam mihi nigrescunt tonsa sudaria barba,——
Sed tibi non crevi: te noster villicus horret:
Te dispensator, te domus ipsa pavet.
Corripis, observas, quereris, suspiria ducis,
Et vix a ferulis abstinet ira manum. MART.

You rock'd my cradle, were my guide
In youth, still tending at my side:
But now, dear sir, my beard is grown,
Still I'm a child to thee alone.
Our steward, butler, cook and all
You fright, nay e'en the very wall;
You pry, and frown, and growl, and chide,
And scarce will lay the rod aside. F. LEWIS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU seem in all your papers to be an enemy to tyranny, and to look with impartiality upon the world; I shall therefore lay my case before you, and hope by your decision to be set free from unreasonable restraints, and enabled to justify myself against the accusations which spite and peevishness produce against me.

At the age of five years I lost my mother, and my father being not qualified to superintend the education of a girl, committed me to the care of his sister, who instructed me with the authority, and, not to deny

deny her what ſhe may juſtly claim, with the affection of a parent. She had not very elevated ſentiments or extenſive views, but her principles were good, and her intentions pure; and though ſome may practiſe more virtues, ſcarce any commit fewer faults.

Under this good lady I learned all the common rules of decent behaviour, and ſtanding maxims of domeſtick prudence; and might have grown up by degrees to a country gentlewoman, without any thoughts of ranging beyond the neighbourhood, had not *Flavia* come down, laſt ſummer, to viſit her relations in the next village. I was taken, of courſe, to compliment the ſtranger, and was, at the firſt ſight, ſurpriſed at the unconcern with which ſhe ſaw herſelf gazed at by company whom ſhe had never known before; at the careleſneſs with which ſhe received compliments, and the readineſs with which ſhe returned them. I found ſhe had ſomething which I perceived myſelf to want, and could not but wiſh to be like her, at once eaſy and officious, attentive and unembarraſſed. I went home and for four days could think and talk of nothing but miſs *Flavia*; though my aunt told me, that ſhe was a forward flirt, and thought herſelf wiſe before her time.

In a little time ſhe repaid my viſit, and raiſed in my heart a new confuſion of love and admiration. I ſoon ſaw her again, and ſtill found new charms in her air, converſation, and behaviour. You who have perhaps ſeen the world, may have obſerved, that formality ſoon ceaſes between young perſons. I know not how others are affected on ſuch occaſions,

but I found myſelf irreſiſtibly allured to friendſhip and intimacy, by the familiar complaiſance and airy gaiety of *Flavia*; ſo that in a few weeks I became her favourite, and all the time was paſſed with me, that ſhe could gain from ceremony and viſit.

As ſhe came often to me, ſhe neceſſarily ſpent ſome hours with my aunt, to whom ſhe paid great reſpect, by low courteſies, ſubmiſſive compliance, and ſoft acquieſcence; but as I became gradually more accuſtomed to her manners, I diſcovered that her civility was general; that there was a certain degree of deference ſhewn by her to circumſtances and appearances; that many went away flattered by her humility, whom ſhe deſpiſed in her heart; that the influence of far the greateſt part of thoſe with whom ſhe converſed ceaſed with their preſence; and that ſometimes ſhe did not remember the names of them, whom, without any intentional inſincerity or falſe commendation, her habitual civility had ſent away with very high thoughts of their own importance.

It was not long before I perceived, that my aunt's opinion was not of much weight in *Flavia*'s deliberations, and that ſhe was looked upon by her as a woman of narrow ſentiments, without knowledge of books, or obſervations on mankind. I had hitherto conſidered my aunt, as entitled by her wiſdom and experience to the higheſt reverence, and could not forbear to wonder that any one ſo much younger ſhould venture to ſuſpect her of error, or ignorance; but my ſurprize was without uneaſineſs, and being now accuſtomed to think *Flavia* always in the right, I readily learned from her to truſt my own reaſon,

and

and to believe it poſſible, that they who had lived longer might be miſtaken.

Flavia had read much, and uſed ſo often to converſe on ſubjects of learning, that ſhe put all the men in the county to flight, except the old parſon, who declared himſelf much delighted with her company, becauſe ſhe gave him opportunities to recollect the ſtudies of his younger years, and by ſome mention of ancient ſtory, had made him rub the duſt off his *Homer*, which had lain unregarded in his cloſet. With *Homer*, and a thouſand other names familiar to *Flavia*, I had no acquaintance, but began, by comparing her accompliſhments with my own, to repine at my education, and wiſh that I had not been ſo long confined to the company of thoſe from whom nothing but houſewifery was to be learned. I then ſet myſelf to peruſe ſuch books as *Flavia* recommended, and heard her opinion of their beauties and defects. I ſaw new worlds hourly burſting upon my mind, and was enraptured at the proſpect of diverſifying life with endleſs entertainment.

The old lady finding that a large ſcreen, which I had undertaken to adorn with turkey-work againſt winter, made very ſlow advances, and that I had added in two months but three leaves to a flowered apron then in the frame, took the alarm, and with all the zeal of honeſt folly exclaimed againſt my new acquaintance, who had filled me with idle notions, and turned my head with books. But ſhe had now loſt her authority, for I began to find innumerable miſtakes in her opinions, and improprieties in her language; and therefore thought myſelf no longer

bound

bound to pay much regard to one who knew little beyond her needle and her dairy, and who profeſſed to think that nothing more is required of a woman than to ſee that the houſe is clean, and that the maids go to bed and riſe at a certain hour.

She ſeemed however to look upon *Flavia* as ſeducing me, and to imagine that when her influence was withdrawn, I ſhould return to my allegiance; ſhe therefore contented herſelf with remote hints, and gentle admonitions, intermixed with ſage hiſtories of the miſcarriages of wit, and diſappointments of pride. But ſince ſhe has found, that though *Flavia* is departed, I ſtill perſiſt in my new ſcheme, ſhe has at length loſt her patience, ſhe ſnatches my book out of my hand, tears my paper if ſhe finds me writing, burns *Flavia*'s letters before my face when ſhe can ſeize them, and threatens to lock me up, and to complain to my father of my perverſeneſs. If women, ſhe ſays, would but know their duty and their intereſt, they would be careful to acquaint themſelves with family affairs, and many a penny might be ſaved; for while the miſtreſs of the houſe is ſcribbling and reading, ſervants are junketing, and linen is wearing out. She then takes me round the rooms, ſhews me the worked hangings, and chairs of tent-ſtitch, and aſks whether all this was done with a pen and a book.

I cannot deny that I ſometimes laugh and ſometimes am ſullen; but ſhe has not delicacy enough to be much moved either with my mirth or my gloom, if ſhe did not think the intereſt of the family endangered by this change of my manners. She had for ſome years marked out young Mr.

Surly, an heir in the neighbourhood, remarkable for his love of fighting-cocks, as an advantageous match; and was extremely pleaſed with the civilities which he uſed to pay me, till under *Flavia*'s tuition I learned to talk of ſubjects which he could not underſtand. This, ſhe ſays, is the conſequence of female ſtudy; girls grow too wiſe to be adviſed, and too ſtubborn to be commanded; but ſhe is reſolved to try who ſhall govern, and will thwart my humour till ſhe breaks my ſpirit.

Theſe menaces, Mr. *Rambler*, ſometimes make me quite angry; for I have been ſixteen theſe ten weeks, and think myſelf exempted from the dominion of a governeſs, who has no pretenſions to more ſenſe or knowledge than myſelf. I am reſolved, ſince I am as tall and as wiſe as other women, to be no longer treated like a girl. Miſs *Flavia* has often told me, that ladies of my age go to aſſemblies and routes, without their mothers and their aunts; I ſhall therefore, from this time, leave aſking advice, and refuſe to give accounts. I wiſh you would ſtate the time at which young ladies may judge for themſelves, which I am ſure you cannot but think ought to begin before ſixteen; if you are inclined to delay it longer, I ſhall have very little regard to your opinion.

My aunt often tells me of the advantages of experience, and of the deference due to ſeniority; and both ſhe, and all the antiquated part of the world, talk of the unreſerved obedience which they paid to the commands of their parents, and the undoubting confidence with which they liſtened to their precepts; of the terrors which they felt at a frown,

and the humility with which they ſupplicated forgiveneſs whenever they had offended. I cannot but fancy that this boaſt is too general to be true, and that the young and the old were always at variance. I have, however, told my aunt, that I will mend whatever ſhe will prove to be wrong; but ſhe replies that ſhe has reaſons of her own, and that ſhe is ſorry to live in an age when girls have the impudence to aſk for proofs.

I beg once again, Mr. *Rambler*, to know whether I am not as wiſe as my aunt, and whether, when ſhe preſumes to check me as a baby, I may not pluck up a ſpirit and return her inſolence. I ſhall not proceed to extremities without your advice, which is therefore impatiently expected by

MYRTYLLA.

P. S. Remember I am paſt ſixteen.

NUMB. 85. TUESDAY, *January* 8, 1751.

Otia ſi tollas periere Cupidinis *arcus*
Contemptæque jacent, et ſine luce faces. OVID.

At buſy hearts in vain love's arrows fly;
Dim, ſcorn'd, and impotent, his torches lie.

MANY writers of eminence in phyſick have laid out their diligence upon the conſideration of thoſe diſtempers to which men are expoſed by particular ſtates of life, and very learned treatiſes have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the ſea, and the mines. There are, indeed, few employments which a man accuſtomed to anatomical enquiries, and medical refinements, would not find reaſons for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning or experience inform him, that almoſt every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and ſafer than a life of ſloth.

The neceſſity of action is not only demonſtrable from the fabrick of the body, but evident from obſervation of the univerſal practice of mankind, who for the preſervation of health, in thoſe whoſe rank or wealth exempts them from the neceſſity of lucrative labour, have invented ſports and diverſions, though not of equal uſe to the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to thoſe that practiſe them, and differing only from the drudgery of the huſbandman or manufacturer, as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful ſenſe of compulſion.

pulſion. The huntſman riſes early, purſues his game through all the dangers and obſtructions of the chace, ſwims rivers, and ſcales precipices, till he returns home no leſs haraſſed than the ſoldier, and has perhaps ſometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds or death: Yet he has no motive to incite his ardour; he is neither ſubject to the commands of a general, nor dreads any penalties for neglect and diſobedience; he has neither profit or honour to expect from his perils and his conqueſts, but toils without the hope of mural or civick garlands, and muſt content himſelf with the praiſe of his tenants and companions.

But ſuch is the conſtitution of man, that labour may be ſtyled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requiſite, if it be conſidered how much happineſs is gained, and how much miſery eſcaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Eaſe is the moſt that can be hoped from a ſedentary and unactive habit; eaſe, a neutral ſtate between pain and pleaſure. The dance of ſpirits, the bound of vigour, readineſs of enterprize, and defiance of fatigue, are reſerved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent expoſure fortifies his frame againſt the common accidents of cold and heat.

With eaſe, however, if it could be ſecured, many would be content; but nothing terreſtrial can be kept at a ſtand. Eaſe, if it is not riſing into pleaſure, will be falling towards pain; and whatever hope the dreams of ſpeculation may ſuggeſt of obſerving the proportion between nutriment and labour, and keeping the body in a healthy ſtate by ſupplies exactly equal to its waſte, we know that, in ef-

fect, the vital powers unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid; that as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away slowly with periodical tortures, and which, though they sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed; but while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from heaven, and chronical from ourselves; the dart of death indeed falls from heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct; to die is the fate of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly.

It is necessary to that perfection of which our present state is capable, that the mind and body should both be kept in action; that neither the faculties of the one nor of the other be suffered to grow lax or torpid for want of use; that neither health be purchased by voluntary submission to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the expence of that health, which must enable it either to give pleasure to its possessor, or assistance to others. It is too frequently the pride of students to despise those amusements and recreations, which give to the rest of mankind strength of limbs and cheerfulness of heart. Solitude and contemplation are indeed seldom consistent with such skill in common exercises or sports as is necessary to make them practised with delight, and no man is

is willing to do that of which the neceſſity is not preſſing and immediate, when he knows that his auk-wardneſs muſt make him ridiculous.

Ludere qui neſcit, campeſtribus abſtinet armis,
Indoctuſque pilæ, diſcive, trochive quieſcit,
No ſpiſſæ riſum tollant impunè coronæ. HOR.

He that's unſkilful will not toſs a ball,
Nor run, nor wreſtle, for he fears the fall;
He juſtly fears to meet deſerv'd diſgrace,
And that the ring will hiſs the baffled aſs. CREECH.

Thus the man of learning is often reſigned, almoſt by his own conſent, to languor and pain; and while in the proſecution of his ſtudies he ſuffers the wearineſs of labour, is ſubject by his courſe of life to the maladies of idleneſs.

It was, perhaps, from the obſervation of this miſchievous omiſſion in thoſe who are employed about intellectual objects, that *Locke* has, in his *Syſtem of Education,* urged the neceſſity of a trade to men of all ranks and profeſſions, that when the mind is weary with its proper taſk, it may be relaxed by a ſlighter attention to ſome mechanical operation; and that while the vital functions are reſuſcitated and awakened by vigorous motion, the underſtanding may be reſtrained from that vagrance and diſſipation by which it relieves itſelf after a long intenſeneſs of thought, unleſs ſome allurement be preſented that may engage application without anxiety.

There is ſo little reaſon for expecting frequent conformity to *Locke*'s precept, that it is not neceſſary to enquire whether the practice of mechanical arts might not give occaſion to petty emulation, and

degenerate ambition; and whether, if our divines and phyficians were taught the lathe and the chizzel, they would not think more of their tools than their books; as *Nero* neglected the care of his empire for his chariot and his fiddle. It is certainly dangerous to be too much pleafed with little things; but what is there which may not be perverted? Let us remember how much worfe employment might have been found for thofe hours, which a manual occupation appears to engrofs; let us compute the profit with the lofs, and when we reflect how often a genius is allured from his ftudies, confider likewife that perhaps by the fame attractions he is fometimes withheld from debauchery, or recalled from malice, from ambition, from envy, and from luft.

I have always admired the wifdom of thofe by whom our female education was inftituted, for having contrived, that every woman of whatever condition fhould be taught fome arts of manufacture, by which the vacuities of reclufe and domeftick leifure may be filled up. Thefe arts are more neceffary as the weaknefs of their fex and the general fyftem of life debar ladies from many employments which, by diverfifying the circumftances of men, preferve them from being cankered by the ruft of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happinefs of the world may be the confequence of this judicious regulation. Perhaps, the moft powerful fancy might be unable to figure the confufion and flaughter that would be produced by fo many piercing eyes and vivid underftandings, turned loofe at once upon mankind, with no other bufinefs than to fparkle and intrigue, to perplex and to deftroy.

For my part, whenever chance brings within my obſervation a knot of miſſes buſy at their needles, I conſider myſelf as in the ſchool of virtue; and though I have no extraordinary ſkill in plain work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much ſatisfaction as their governeſs, becauſe I regard them as providing a ſecurity againſt the moſt dangerous enſnarers of the ſoul, by enabling themſelves to exclude idleneſs from their ſolitary moments, and with idleneſs her attendant train of paſſions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, ſorrows, and deſires. *Ovid* and *Cervantes* will inform them that love has no power but over thoſe whom he catches unemployed; and *Hector*, in the *Iliad*, when he ſees *Andromache* overwhelmed with terrors, ſends her for conſolation to the loom and the diſtaff.

It is certain that any wild wiſh or vain imagination never takes ſuch firm poſſeſſion of the mind, as when it is found empty and unoccupied. The old peripatetick principle, that *Nature abhors a vacuum*, may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace any thing, however abſurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. Perhaps every man may date the predominance of thoſe deſires that diſturb his life and contaminate his conſcience, from ſome unhappy hour when too much leiſure expoſed him to their incurſions; for he has lived with little obſervation either on himſelf or others, who does not know that to be idle is to be vicious.

NUMB. 86. SATURDAY, *January* 12, 1751.

Legitimumque ſonum digitis callemus et aure. HOR.

By fingers, or by ear, we numbers ſcan. ELPHINSTON.

ONE of the ancients has obſerved, that the burthen of government is encreaſed upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predeceſſors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a ſtate of unavoidable compariſon with excellence, and the danger is ſtill greater when that excellence is conſecrated by death; when envy and intereſt ceaſe to act againſt it, and thoſe paſſions by which it was at firſt vilified and oppoſed, now ſtand in its defence, and turn their vehemence againſt honeſt emulation.

He that ſucceeds a celebrated writer, has the ſame difficulties to encounter; he ſtands under the ſhade of exalted merit, and is hindered from riſing to his natural height, by the interception of thoſe beams which ſhould invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain ſatisfaction; or perhaps to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the ſame object.

One of the old poets congratulates himſelf that he has the untrodden regions of *Parnaſſus* before him, and that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten walk, and with all his diligence can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched

touched by his predeceſſor, the refuſe of contempt, or the omiſſions of negligence. The *Macedonian* conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that ſung like a nightingale, replied with contempt, "that he had heard the nightingale herſelf;" and the ſame treatment muſt every man expect, whoſe praiſe is that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midſt of theſe diſcouraging reflections, I am about to offer to my reader ſome obſervations upon *Paradiſe Loſt*, and hope, that, however I may fall below the illuſtrious writer who has ſo long dictated to the commonwealth of learning, my attempt may not be wholly uſeleſs. There are, in every age, new errors to be rectified, and new prejudices to be oppoſed. Falſe taſte is always buſy to miſlead thoſe that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller, uncertain of his way, and forſaken by the ſun, will be pleaſed to ſee a fainter orb ariſe on the horizon, that may reſcue him from total darkneſs, though with weak and borrowed luſtre.

Addiſon, though he has conſidered this poem under moſt of the general topicks of criticiſm, has barely touched upon the verſification; not probably becauſe he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with how minute attention the ancient criticks conſidered the diſpoſition of ſyllables, and had himſelf given hopes of ſome metrical obſervations upon the great *Roman* poet; but being the firſt who undertook to diſplay the beauties, and point out the defects of *Milton*, he had many objects at once before him, and paſſed willingly over thoſe which were moſt barren of ideas, and required labour, rather than genius.

Yet verſification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indiſpenſably neceſſary to a poet. Every other power by which the underſtanding is enlightened, or the imagination enchanted, may be exerciſed in proſe. But the poet has this peculiar ſuperiority, that to all the powers which the perfection of every other compoſition can require, he adds the faculty of joining muſick with reaſon, and of acting at once upon the ſenſes and the paſſions. I ſuppoſe there are few who do not feel themſelves touched by poetical melody, and who will not confeſs that they are more or leſs moved by the ſame thoughts, as they are conveyed by different ſounds, and more affected by the ſame words in one order than in another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal, but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular ſeries of proportionate ſounds cannot give delight.

In treating on the verſification of *Milton* I am deſirous to be generally underſtood, and ſhall therefore ſtudiouſly decline the dialect of grammarians; though, indeed, it is always difficult, and ſometimes ſcarcely poſſible, to deliver the precepts of an art, without the terms by which the peculiar ideas of that art are expreſſed, and which had not been invented but becauſe the language already in uſe was inſufficient. If therefore I ſhall ſometimes ſeem obſcure, may be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to a deſire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unuſual words.

The heroick meaſure of the *Engliſh* language may be properly conſidered as pure or mixed. It is pure when

when the accent refts upon every fecond fyllable through the whole line.

> Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
> But whó can beár th' appróach of cértain fáte.
>
> DRYDEN.

> Here love his golden fhafts employs, here lights
> His cónftant lámp, and wáves his púrple wíngs,
> Reigns here, and revels; not in the bought fmile
> Of hárlots, lóvelefs, jóylefs, únendéar'd. MILTON.

The accent may be obferved, in the fecond line of *Dryden*, and the fecond and fourth of *Milton*, to repofe upon every fecond fyllable.

The repetition of this found or percuffion at equal times, is the moft complete harmony of which a fingle verfe is capable, and fhould therefore be exactly kept in diftichs, and generally in the laft line of a paragraph, that the ear may reft without any fenfe of imperfection.

But, to preferve the feries of founds untranfpofed in a long compofition, is not only very difficult but tirefome and difgufting; for we are foon wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the fame cadence. Neceffity has therefore enforced the mixed meafure, in which fome variation of the accents is allowed; this, though it always injures the harmony of the line confidered by itfelf, yet compenfates the lofs by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the fame found, and makes us more fenfible of the harmony of the pure meafure.

Of thefe mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable inftances, and *Milton* feldom has two pure lines together, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the mufick.

Thus

Thus at their ſhady lodge arriv'd, both ſtood,
Both turn'd, and under open ſky ador'd
The God that made both ſky, air, earth, and heav'n,
Which they beheld; the moon's reſplendent globe,
And ſtarry pole: thou alſo mad'ſt the night,
Maker omnipotent! and thou the day,
Which we in our appointed work employ'd
Have finiſh'd, happy in our mutual help,
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliſs
Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
For us too large; where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncrop'd falls to the ground;
But thou haſt promis'd from us two a race
To fill the earth, who ſhall with us extol
Thy goodneſs infinite, both when we wake,
And when we ſeek, as now, thy gift of ſleep.

In this paſſage it will be at firſt obſerved, that all the lines are not equally harmonious, and upon a nearer examination it will be found that only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, and the reſt are more or leſs licentious with reſpect to the accent. In ſome the accent is equally upon two ſyllables together, and in both ſtrong. As

Thus at their ſhady lodge arriv'd, *both ſtood,*
Both turn'd, and under open ſky ador'd
The God that made both ſky, *air*, *earth*, and heav'n.

In others the accent is equally upon two ſyllables, but upon both weak.

——————a race
To fill the earth, who ſhall with us extol
Thy goodneſs in*finite*, both when we wake,
And when we ſeek, as now, thy gift of ſleep.

In the firſt pair of ſyllables the accent may deviate from the rigour of exactneſs, without any unpleaſing diminution of harmony, as may be obſerved in the lines already cited, and more remarkably in this,

——————Thou alſo mad'ſt the night,
Maker omnipotent! and thou the day.

But, excepting in the firſt pair of ſyllables, which may be conſidered as arbitrary, a poet who, not having the invention or knowledge of *Milton*, has more need to allure his audience by muſical cadences, ſhould ſeldom ſuffer more than one aberration from the rule in any ſingle verſe.

There are two lines in this paſſage more remarkably unharmonious:

——————This delicious place,
For us too large; *where thy* abundance wants
Partakers, and uncrop'd *falls to* the ground.

Here the third pair of ſyllables in the firſt, and fourth pair in the ſecond verſe, have their accents retrograde or inverted; the firſt ſyllable being ſtrong or acute, and the ſecond weak. The detriment which the meaſure ſuffers by this inverſion of the accents is ſometimes leſs perceptible, when the verſes are carried one into another, but is remarkably ſtriking in this place, where the vicious verſe concludes a period; and is yet more offenſive in rhyme, when we regularly attend to the flow of every ſingle line. This will appear by reading a couplet in which *Cowley*, an author not ſufficiently ſtudious of harmony, has committed the ſame fault:

——his harmleſs life
Does with ſubſtantial bleſſedneſs abound,
And the ſoft wings of peace *cover* him round.

In

In these the law of metre is very grossly violated by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other, as *Milton* expresses in his sonnet, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than ours, had two kinds of verse, the *Iambick*, consisting of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroick measure is derived, and the *Trochaick*, consisting in a like alternation of long and short. These were considered as opposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness; to confound them, therefore, as in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But where the senses are to judge, authority is not necessary, the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance, nor should I have sought auxiliaries on such an occasion against any name but that of *Milton*.

NUMB. 87. TUESDAY, *January* 15, 1751.

Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinoſus, amator,
Nemo adeo ferus eſt, ut non miteſcere poſſit,
Si modo culturæ patientem commodet aurem. HOR.

The ſlave to envy, anger, wine, or love,
The wretch of ſloth, its excellence ſhall prove;
Fierceneſs itſelf ſhall hear its rage away,
When liſt'ning calmly to th' inſtructive lay. FRANCIS.

THAT few things are ſo liberally beſtowed, or ſquandered with ſo little effect, as good advice, has been generally obſerved; and many ſage poſitions have been advanced concerning the reaſons of this complaint, and the means of removing it. It is indeed an important and noble enquiry, for little would be wanting to the happineſs of life, if every man could conform to the right as ſoon as he was ſhown it.

This perverſe neglect of the moſt ſalutary precepts, and ſtubborn reſiſtance of the moſt pathetick perſuaſion, is uſually imputed to him by whom the counſel is received, and we often hear it mentioned as a ſign of hopeleſs depravity, that though good advice was given, it has wrought no reformation.

Others, who imagine themſelves to have quicker ſagacity and deeper penetration, have found out, that the inefficacy of advice is uſually the fault of the counſellor, and rules have been laid down, by which this important duty may be ſucceſsfully per-

formed: We are directed by what tokens to discover the favourable moment at which the heart is disposed for the operation of truth and reason, with what address to administer, and with what vehicles to disguise *the cathartics of the soul.*

But, notwithstanding this specious expedient, we find the world yet in the same state; advice is still given, but still received with disgust; nor has it appeared that the bitterness of the medicine has been yet abated, or its power encreased, by any methods of preparing it.

If we consider the manner in which those who assume the office of directing the conduct of others execute their undertaking, it will not be very wonderful that their labours, however zealous or affectionate, are frequently useless. For what is the advice that is commonly given? A few general maxims, enforced with vehemence and inculcated with importunity, but failing for want of particular reference and immediate application.

It is not often that any man can have so much knowledge of another, as is necessary to make instruction useful. We are sometimes not ourselves conscious of the original motives of our actions, and when we know them, our first care is to hide them from the sight of others, and often from those most diligently, whose superiority either of power or understanding may intitle them to inspect our lives; it is therefore very probable that he who endeavours the cure of our intellectual maladies, mistakes their cause; and that his prescriptions avail nothing, because he knows not which of the passions or desires is vitiated.

Advice, as it always gives a temporary appearance of ſuperiority, can never be very grateful, even when it is moſt neceſſary or moſt judicious. But for the ſame reaſon every one is eager to inſtruct his neighbours. To be wiſe or to be virtuous, is to buy dignity and importance at a high price; but when nothing is neceſſary to elevation but detection of the follies or the faults of others, no man is ſo inſenſible to the voice of fame as to linger on the ground.

——*Tentanda via eſt, qua me quoque poſſim*
Tollere humo, victorque virûm volitare per ora. VIRG.

New ways I muſt attempt, my groveling name
To raiſe aloft, and wing my flight to fame. DRYDEN.

Vanity is ſo frequently the apparent motive of advice, that we, for the moſt part, ſummon our powers to oppoſe it without any very accurate enquiry whether it is right. It is ſufficient that another is growing great in his own eyes at our expence, and aſſumes authority over us without our permiſſion; for many would contentedly ſuffer the conſequences of their own miſtakes, rather than the inſolence of him who triumphs as their deliverer.

It is, indeed, ſeldom found that any advantages are enjoyed with that moderation which the uncertainty of all human good ſo powerfully enforces; and therefore the adviſer may juſtly ſuſpect, that he has inflamed the oppoſition which he laments by arrogance and ſuperciliouſneſs. He may ſuſpect, but needs not haſtily to condemn himſelf, for he can rarely be certain that the ſofteſt language or moſt

humble diffidence would have escaped resentment; since scarcely any degree of circumspection can prevent or obviate the rage with which the slothful, the impotent, and the unsuccessful, vent their discontent upon those that excel them. Modesty itself, if it is praised, will be envied; and there are minds so impatient of inferiority, that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompence is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain.

The number of those whom the love of themselves has thus far corrupted, is perhaps not great; but there are few so free from vanity, as not to dictate to those who will hear their instructions with a visible sense of their own beneficence; and few to whom it is not unpleasing to receive documents, however tenderly and cautiously delivered, or who are not willing to raise themselves from pupillage, by disputing the propositions of their teacher.

It was the maxim, I think, of *Alphonsus* of *Arragon*, that *dead counsellors are safest*. The grave puts an end to flattery and artifice, and the information that we receive from books is pure from interest, fear, or ambition. Dead counsellors are likewise most instructive; because they are heard with patience and with reverence. We are not unwilling to believe that man wiser than ourselves, from whose abilities we may receive advantage, without any danger of rivalry or opposition, and who affords us the light of his experience, without hurting our eyes by flashes of insolence.

By the consultation of books, whether of dead or living authors, many temptations to petulance and opposition,

oppoſition, which occur in oral conferences, are avoided. An author cannot obtrude his advice unaſked, nor can be often ſuſpected of any malignant intention to inſult his readers with his knowledge or his wit. Yet ſo prevalent is the habit of comparing ourſelves with others, while they remain within the reach of our paſſions, that books are ſeldom read with complete impartiality, but by thoſe from whom the writer is placed at ſuch a diſtance that his life or death is indifferent.

We ſee that volumes may be peruſed, and peruſed with attention, to little effect; and that maxims of prudence, or principles of virtue, may be treaſured in the memory without influencing the conduct. Of the numbers that paſs their lives among books, very few read to be made wiſer or better, apply any general reproof of vice to themſelves, or try their own manners by axioms of juſtice. They purpoſe either to conſume thoſe hours for which they can find no other amuſement, to gain or preſerve that reſpect which learning has always obtained; or to gratify their curioſity with knowledge, which, like treaſures buried and forgotten, is of no uſe to others or themſelves.

" The preacher (ſays a *French* author) may ſpend " an hour in explaining and enforcing a precept of " religion, without feeling any impreſſion from his " own performance, becauſe he may have no further " deſign than to fill up his hour." A ſtudent may eaſily exhauſt his life in comparing divines and moraliſts, without any practical regard to morality or religion; he may be learning not to live, but to reaſon; he may regard only the elegance of ſtyle, juſt-

neſs of argument, and accuracy of method; and may enable himſelf to criticiſe with judgment, and diſpute with ſubtilty, while the chief uſe of his volumes is unthought of, his mind is unaffected, and his life is unreformed.

But though truth and virtue are thus frequently defeated by pride, obſtinacy, or folly, we are not allowed to deſert them; for whoever can furniſh arms which they hitherto have not employed, may enable them to gain ſome hearts which would have reſiſted any other method of attack. Every man of genius has ſome arts of fixing the attention peculiar to himſelf, by which, honeſtly exerted, he may benefit mankind; for the arguments for purity of life fail of of their due influence, not becauſe they have been conſidered and confuted, but becauſe they have been paſſed over without conſideration. To the poſition of *Tully*, that if Virtue could be ſeen, ſhe muſt be loved, may be added, that if Truth could be heard, ſhe muſt be obeyed.

NUMB. 88. SATURDAY, *January* 19, 1751.

Cum tabulis animum cenſoris ſumet honeſti:
Audebit quæcunque minus ſplendoris habebunt,
Aut ſine pondere erunt, et honore indigna ferentur,
Verba movere loco, quamvis invita recedant,
Et verſentur adhuc intra penetralia Veſtæ. HOR.

But he that hath a curious piece deſign'd,
When he begins muſt take a cenſor's mind,
Severe and honeſt; and what words appear
Too light and trivial, or too weak to bear
The weighty ſenſe, nor worth the reader's care,
Shake off; tho' ſtubborn, they are loth to move,
And tho' we fancy, dearly tho' we love. CREECH.

"THERE is no reputation for genius, ſays "*Quintilian*, to be gained by writing on "things, which, however neceſſary, have little "ſplendor or ſhew. The height of a building at-"tracts the eye, but the foundations lie without "regard. Yet ſince there is not any way to the "top of ſcience, but from the loweſt parts, I ſhall "think nothing unconnected with the art of oratory, "which he that wants cannot be an orator."

Confirmed and animated by this illuſtrious precedent, I ſhall continue my enquiries into *Milton*'s art of verſification. Since, however minute the employment may appear, of analyſing lines into ſyllables, and whatever ridicule may be incurred by a ſolemn deliberation upon accents and pauſes, it is

certain that without this petty knowledge no man can be a poet; and that from the proper disposition of single sounds results that harmony that adds force to reason, and gives grace to sublimity; that shackles attention, and governs passions.

That verse may be melodious and pleasing, it is necessary, not only that the words be so ranged as that the accent may fall on its proper place, but that the syllables themselves be so chosen as to flow smoothly into one another. This is to be effected by a proportionate mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semivowels. The *Hebrew* grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the consonants are less harmonically conjoined, and, by consequence, the flow of the verse is longer interrupted.

It is pronounced by *Dryden*, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, is evidently true, not because monosyllables cannot compose harmony, but because our monosyllables being of *Teutonick* original, or formed by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as,

——Every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste.

The difference of harmony arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will

be

be ſufficiently conceived by attending to the following paſſages:

> Immortal *Amarant* —— there grows
> And flow'rs aloft, ſhading the fount of life,
> And where the river of bliſs through midſt of heav'n
> *Rolls o'er Elyſian flow'rs her amber ſtream*;
> With theſe that never fade, the ſpirits elect
> *Bind their reſplendent locks inwreath'd with beams.*

The ſame compariſon that I propoſe to be made between the fourth and ſixth verſes of this paſſage, may be repeated between the laſt lines of the following quotations:

> Under foot the violet,
> Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich in-lay
> *Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with ſtone*
> Of coſtlieſt emblem.

> Here in cloſe receſs,
> With flowers, garlands, and ſweet-ſmelling herbs,
> Eſpouſed *Eve* firſt deck'd her nuptial bed;
> *And heav'nly choirs the hymenean ſung.*

Milton, whoſe ear had been accuſtomed, not only to the muſick of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excel all that are now in uſe, but to the ſoftneſs of the *Italian*, the moſt mellifluous of all modern poetry, ſeems fully convinced of the unfitneſs of our language for ſmooth verſification, and is therefore pleaſed with an opportunity of calling in a ſofter word to his aſſiſtance; for this reaſon, and I believe for this only, he ſometimes indulges himſelf in a long ſeries of

proper

proper names, and introduces them where they add little but musick to his poem.

> ——The richer seat
> Of *Atabalipa*, and yet unspoil'd
> *Guiana*, whose great city *Gerion*'s sons
> Call *El Dorado*.——

> The moon——The *Tuscan* artist views
> At evening, from the top of *Fesole*
> Or in *Valdarno*, to descry new lands.——

He has indeed been more attentive to his syllables than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants, or openings of vowels upon each other, at least not more often than other writers who have had less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

The great peculiarity of *Milton*'s versification, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As

> Knowledge——
> Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
> Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

This licence, though now disused in *English* poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the criticks on *Paradise Lost* have, without much deliberation, commended *Milton* for continuing it. But one language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and

rejected

rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the *Italians*, and the alexandrine of the *French*; and the elision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the *English* tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e* which our anceſtors added to moſt of our monoſyllables, was once vocal. By this detruncation of our ſyllables, our language is overſtocked with conſonants, and it is more neceſſary to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton therefore ſeems to have ſomewhat miſtaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is ruggedneſs and aſperity, and has left our harſh cadences yet harſher. But his eliſions are not all equally to be cenſured; in ſome ſyllables they may be allowed, and perhaps in a few may be ſafely imitated. The abſciſſion of a vowel is undoubtedly vicious when it is ſtrongly ſounded, and makes, with its aſſociate conſonant, a full and audible ſyllable.

——What he gives,
Spiritual, may to pureſt ſpirits be found,
No ingrateful food, and food alike theſe pure
Intelligential ſubſtances require.

Fruits,——*Heſperian* fables true,
If true, here *only*, and of delicious taſte.

——Evening now approach'd,
For we have *alſo* our evening and our morn.

Of gueſts he makes them ſlaves,
Inhoſpita*bly*, and kills their infant males.

And

And vital Vir*tue* infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid maſs.———

God made *thee* of choice his own, and of his own
To ſerve him.

I believe every reader will agree that in all thoſe paſſages, though not equally in all, the muſick is injured, and in ſome the meaning obſcured. There are other lines in which the vowel is cut off, but it is ſo faintly pronounced in common ſpeech, that the loſs of it in poetry is ſcarcely perceived; and therefore ſuch compliance with the meaſure may be allowed.

Nature breeds
Perverſe, all monſtrous, all prodigious things,
Abomina*ble*, inuttera*ble*; and worſe
Than fables yet have feign'd———

———From the ſhore
They view'd the vaſt immenſura*ble* abyſs.

Impenetra*ble*, impal'd with circling fire.

To none communica*ble* in earth or heav'n.

Yet even theſe contractions encreaſe the roughneſs of a language too rough already; and though in long poems they may be ſometimes ſuffered, it never can be faulty to forbear them.

Milton frequently uſes in his poems the hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven ſyllables.

———Thus it ſhall befall
Him who to worth in woman over-truſt*ing*
Lets her will rule———

I alſo err'd in over-much admir*ing*.

Verſes

Verses of this kind occur almost in every page; but though they are not unpleasing or dissonant, they ought not to be admitted into heroick poetry, since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epick and tragick measures, than is afforded by the liberty of changing at will the terminations of the dramatick lines, and bringing them by that relaxation of metrical rigour nearer to prose.

NUMB. 89. TUESDAY, *January* 22, 1751.

Dulce est desipere in loco. HOR.

Wisdom at proper times is well forgot.

LOCKE, whom there is no reason to suspect of being a favourer of idleness or libertinism, has advanced, that whoever hopes to employ any part of his time with efficacy and vigour, must allow some of it to pass in trifles. It is beyond the powers of humanity to spend a whole life in profound study and intense meditation, and the most rigorous exacters of industry and seriousness have appointed hours for relaxation and amusement.

It is certain, that, with or without our consent, many of the few moments allotted us will slide imperceptibly away, and that the mind will break, from confinement to its stated task, into sudden excursions. Severe and connected attention is preserved but for a short time, and when a man shuts himself up in his closet, and bends his thoughts to the discussion of any

abſtruſe queſtion, he will find his faculties continually ſtealing away to more pleaſing entertainments. He often perceives himſelf tranſported, he knows not how, to diſtant tracts of thought, and return to his firſt object as from a dream, without knowing when he forſook it, or how long he has been abſtracted from it.

It has been obſerved that the moſt ſtudious are not always the moſt learned. There is, indeed, no great difficulty in diſcovering that this difference of proficiency may ariſe from the difference of intellectual powers, of the choice of books, or the convenience of information. But I believe it likewiſe frequently happens that the moſt recluſe are not the moſt vigorous proſecutors of ſtudy. Many impoſe upon the world, and many upon themſelves, by an appearance of ſevere and exemplary diligence, when they, in reality, give themſelves up to the luxury of fancy, pleaſe their minds with regulating the paſt, or planning out the future; place themſelves at will in varied ſituations of happineſs, and ſlumber away their days in voluntary viſions. In the journey of life ſome are left behind, becauſe they are naturally feeble and ſlow; ſome becauſe they miſs the way, and many becauſe they leave it by choice, and inſtead of preſſing onward with a ſteady pace, delight themſelves with momentary deviations, turn aſide to pluck every flower, and repoſe in every ſhade.

There is nothing more fatal to a man whoſe buſineſs is to think, than to have learned the art of regaling his mind with thoſe airy gratifications. Other vices or follies are reſtrained by fear, reformed by admonition, or rejected by the conviction which the

com-

comparifon of our conduct with that of others, may in time produce. But this invifible riot of the mind, this fecret prodigality of being, is fecure from detection, and fearlefs of reproach. The dreamer retires to his apartments, fhuts out the cares and interruptions of mankind, and abandons himfelf to his own fancy; new worlds rife up before him, one image is followed by another, and a long fucceffion of delights dances round him. He is at laft called back to life by nature, or by cuftom, and enters peevifh into fociety, becaufe he cannot model it to his own will. He returns from his idle excurfions with the afperity, though not with the knowledge of a ftudent, and haftens again to the fame felicity with the eagernefs of a man bent upon the advancement of fome favourite fcience. The infatuation ftrengthens by degrees, and, like the poifon of opiates, weakens his powers, without any external fymptom of malignity.

It happens, indeed, that thefe hypocrites of learning are in time detected, and convinced by difgrace and difappointment of the difference between the labour of thought, and the fport of mufing. But this difcovery is often not made till it is too late to recover the time that has been fooled away. A thoufand accidents may, indeed, awaken drones to a more early fenfe of their danger and their fhame. But they who are convinced of the neceffity of breaking from this habitual drowfinefs, too often relapfe in fpite of their refolution; for thefe ideal feducers are always near, and neither any particularity of time nor place is neceffary to their influence; they invade the foul without warning, and have often charmed down refift-

resistance before their approach is perceived or suspected.

This captivity, however, it is necessary for every man to break, who has any desire to be wise or useful, to pass his life with the esteem of others, or to look back with satisfaction from his old age upon his earlier years. In order to regain liberty, he must find the means of flying from himself; he must, in opposition to the *Stoick* precept, teach his desires to fix upon external things; he must adopt the joys and the pains of others, and excite in his mind the want of social pleasures and amicable communication.

It is, perhaps, not impossible to promote the cure of this mental malady, by close application to some new study, which may pour in fresh ideas, and keep curiosity in perpetual motion. But study requires solitude, and solitude is a state dangerous to those who are too much accustomed to sink into themselves. Active employment or publick pleasure is generally a necessary part of this intellectual regimen, without which, though some remission may be obtained, a complete cure will scarcely be effected.

This is a formidable and obstinate disease of the intellect, of which, when it has once become radicated by time, the remedy is one of the hardest tasks of reason and of virtue. Its slightest attacks, therefore, should be watchfully opposed; and he that finds the frigid and narcotick infection beginning to seize him, should turn his whole attention against it, and check it at the first discovery by proper counteraction.

The great resolution to be formed, when happiness and virtue are thus formidably invaded, is, that

no

no part of life be ſpent in a ſtate of neutrality or indifference; but that ſome pleaſure be found for every moment that is not devoted to labour; and that, whenever the neceſſary buſineſs of life grows irkſome or diſguſting, an immediate tranſition be made to diverſion and gaiety.

After the exerciſes which the health of the body requires, and which have themſelves a natural tendency to actuate and invigorate the mind, the moſt eligible amuſement of a rational being ſeems to be that interchange of thoughts which is practiſed in free and eaſy converſation; where ſuſpicion is baniſhed by experience, and emulation by benevolence; where every man ſpeaks with no other reſtraint than unwillingneſs to offend, and hears with no other diſpoſition than deſire to be pleaſed.

There muſt be a time in which every man trifles; and the only choice that nature offers us, is, to trifle in company or alone. To join profit with pleaſure, has been an old precept among men who have had very different conceptions of profit. All have agreed that our amuſements ſhould not terminate wholly in the preſent moment, but contribute more or leſs to future advantage. He that amuſes himſelf among well choſen companions, can ſcarcely fail to receive, from the moſt careleſs and obſtreperous merriment which virtue can allow, ſome uſeful hints; nor can converſe on the moſt familiar topicks, without ſome caſual information. The looſe ſparkles of thoughtleſs wit may give new light to the mind, and the gay contention for parodoxical poſitions rectify the opinions.

This is the time in which thoſe friendſhips that give happineſs or conſolation, relief or ſecurity, are generally formed. A wiſe and good man is never ſo amiable as in his unbended and familiar intervals. Heroick generoſity, or philoſophical diſcoveries, may compel veneration and reſpect, but love always implies ſome kind of natural or voluntary equality, and is only to be excited by that levity and cheerfulneſs which diſencumbers all minds from awe and ſolicitude, invites the modeſt to freedom, and exalts the timorous to confidence. This eaſy gaiety is certain to pleaſe, whatever be the character of him that exerts it; if our ſuperiors deſcend from their elevation, we love them for leſſening the diſtance at which we are placed below them; and inferiors, from whom we can receive no laſting advantage, will always keep our affections while their ſprightlineſs and mirth contribute to our pleaſure.

Every man finds himſelf differently affected by the ſight of fortreſſes of war, and palaces of pleaſure; we look on the height and ſtrength of the bulwarks with a kind of gloomy ſatisfaction, for we cannot think of defence without admitting images of danger; but we range delighted and jocund through the gay apartments of the palace, becauſe nothing is impreſſed by them on the mind but joy and feſtivity. Such is the difference between great and amiable characters; with protectors we are ſafe, with companions we are happy.

NUMB. 90. SATURDAY, *January* 26, 1751.

In tenui labor. VIRG.

What toil in ſlender things!

IT is very difficult to write on the minuter parts of literature without failing either to pleaſe or inſtruct. Too much nicety of detail diſguſts the greateſt part of readers, and to throw a multitude of particulars under general heads, and lay down rules of extenſive comprehenſion, is to common underſtandings of little uſe. They who undertake theſe ſubjects are therefore always in danger, as one or other inconvenience ariſes to their imagination, of frighting us with rugged ſcience, or amuſing us with empty ſound.

In criticiſing the work of *Milton*, there is, indeed, opportunity to interſperſe paſſages that can hardly fail to relieve the languors of attention; and ſince, in examining the variety and choice of the pauſes with which he has diverſified his numbers, it will be neceſſary to exhibit the lines in which they are to be found, perhaps the remarks may be well compenſated by the examples, and the irkſomeneſs of grammatical diſquiſitions ſomewhat alleviated.

Milton formed his ſcheme of verſification by the poets of *Greece* and *Rome*, whom he propoſed to himſelf for his models, ſo far as the difference of his language from theirs would permit the imitation. There are indeed many inconveniencies inſeparable from

our heroick meaſure compared with that of *Homer* and *Virgil*; inconveniencies, which it is no reproach to *Milton* not to have overcome, becauſe they are in their own nature inſuperable; but againſt which he has ſtrnggled with ſo much art and diligence, that he may at leaſt be ſaid to have deſerved ſucceſs.

The hexameter of the ancients may be conſidered as conſiſting of fifteen ſyllables, ſo melodiouſly diſpoſed, that, as every one knows who has examined the poetical authors, very pleaſing and ſonorous lyrick meaſures are formed from the fragments of the heroick. It is, indeed, ſcarce poſſible to break them in ſuch a manner but that *invenias etiam disjecti membra poëtæ*, ſome harmony will ſtill remain, and the due proportions of ſound will always be diſcovered. This meaſure therefore allowed great variety of pauſes, and great liberties of connecting one verſe with another, becauſe wherever the line was interrupted, either part ſingly was muſical. But the ancients ſeem to have confined this privilege to hexameters; for in their other meaſures, though longer than the *Engliſh* heroick, thoſe who wrote after the refinements of verſification, venture ſo ſeldom to change their pauſes, that every variation may be ſuppoſed rather a compliance with neceſſity than the choice of judgment.

Milton was conſtrained within the narrow limits of a meaſure not very harmonious in the utmoſt perfection; the ſingle parts, therefore, into which it was to be ſometimes broken by pauſes, were in danger of loſing the very form of verſe. This has, perhaps, notwithſtanding all his care, ſometimes happened.

As

As harmony is the end of poetical meaſures, no part of a verſe ought to be ſo ſeparated from the reſt as not to remain ſtill more harmonious than proſe, or to ſhew, by the diſpoſition of the tones, that it is part of a verſe. This rule in the old hexameter might be eaſily obſerved, but in *Engliſh* will very frequently be in danger of violation; for the order and regularity of accents cannot well be perceived in a ſucceſſion of fewer than three ſyllables, which will confine the *Engliſh* poet to only five pauſes; it being ſuppoſed, that, when he connects one line with another, he ſhould never make a full pauſe at leſs diſtance than that of three ſyllables from the beginning or end of a verſe.

That this rule ſhould be univerſally and indiſpenſably eſtabliſhed, perhaps cannot be granted; ſomething may be allowed to variety, and ſomething to the adaptation of the numbers to the ſubject; but it will be found generally neceſſary, and the ear will ſeldom fail to ſuffer by its neglect.

Thus when a ſingle ſyllable is cut off from the reſt, it muſt either be united to the line with which the ſenſe connects it, or be ſounded alone. If it be united to the other line, it corrupts its harmony; if disjoined it muſt ſtand alone, and with regard to muſick be ſuperfluous; for there is no harmony in a ſingle ſound, becauſe it has no proportion to another.

Hypocrites auſterely talk,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure; and commands to ſome, leaves free to all.

When two ſyllables likewiſe are abſcinded from the reſt, they evidently want ſome aſſociate ſounds to make them harmonious.

——Eyes——
——more wakeful than to drouze,
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the paſt'ral reed
Of *Hermes*, or his opiate rod. *Meanwhile*
To re-ſalute the world with ſacred light
Leucothea wak'd.

He ended, and the ſun gave ſignal high
To the bright miniſter that watch'd: *he blew*
His trumpet.

Firſt in the eaſt his glorious lamp was ſeen,
Regent of day; and all th' horizon round
Inveſted with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through heav'n's high road; *the gray*
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danc'd,
Shedding ſweet influence.

The ſame defect is perceived in the following line, where the pauſe is at the ſecond ſyllable from the beginning.

The race
Of that wild rout that tore the *Thracian* bard
In *Rhodope*, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, 'till the ſavage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice; nor could the muſe defend
Her ſon. So fail not thou, who thee implores.

When the pauſe falls upon the third ſyllable or the ſeventh, the harmony is better preſerved; but as the third and ſeventh are weak ſyllables, the period leaves

leaves the ear unſatisfied, and in expectation of the remaining part of the verſe.

He, with his horrid crew,
Lay vanquiſh'd, rolling in the fiery gulph,
Confounded though immor*tal.* But his doom
Reſerv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of loſt happineſs and laſting pain
Torments *him.*

God,—with frequent intercourſe,
Thither will ſend his winged meſſengers
On errands of ſupernal grace. So ſung
The glorious train aſcend*ing.*

It may be, I think, eſtabliſhed as a rule, that a pauſe which concludes a period ſhould be made for the moſt part upon a ſtrong ſyllable, as the fourth and ſixth; but thoſe pauſes which only ſuſpend the ſenſe may be placed upon the weaker. Thus the reſt in the third line of the firſt paſſage ſatisfies the ear better than in the fourth, and the cloſe of the ſecond quotation better than of the third.

The evil ſoon
Drawn back, redounded (as a flood) on thoſe
From whom it *ſprung*; impoſſible to mix
With *bleſſedneſs.*

——What we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to *wild.*

The paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderneſs with eaſe as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Aſſiſt *us.*

The reſt in the fifth place has the ſame inconvenience as in the ſeventh and third, that the ſyllable is weak.

> Beaſt now with beaſt 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
> And fiſh with fiſh, to graze the herb all leaving,
> Devour'd each *other*: Nor ſtood much in awe
> Of man, but fled *him*, or with countenance grim,
> Glar'd on him paſs*ing*.

The nobleſt and moſt majeſtick pauſes which our verſification admits, are upon the fourth and ſixth ſyllables, which are both ſtrongly ſounded in a pure and regular verſe, and at either of which the line is ſo divided, that both members participate of harmony.

> But now at laſt the ſacred influence
> Of light *appears*, and from the walls of heav'n
> Shoots far into the boſom of dim night
> A glimmering *dawn*: here nature firſt begins
> Her fartheſt verge, and chaos to retire.

But far above all others, if I can give any credit to my own ear, is the reſt upon the ſixth ſyllable, which taking in a complete compaſs of ſound, ſuch as is ſufficient to conſtitute one of our lyrick meaſures, makes a full and ſolemn cloſe. Some paſſages which conclude at this ſtop, I could never read without ſome ſtrong emotions of delight or admiration.

> Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
> Thou with the eternal wiſdom didſt converſe,
> Wiſdom thy ſiſter; and with her didſt play
> In preſence of the almighty Father, pleas'd
> With thy celeſtial *ſong*.

Or

Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those *Hesperian* gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there,
He staid not to in*quire*.

He blew
His trumpet, heard in *Oreb* since, perhaps
When GOD descended; and, perhaps, once more
To sound at general *doom*.

If the poetry of *Milton* be examined, with regard to the pauses and flow of his verses into each other, it will appear, that he has performed all that our language would admit; and the comparison of his numbers with those who have cultivated the same manner of writing, will show that he excelled as much in the lower as the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not less than his invention or his learning.

NUMB. 91. TUESDAY, *January* 29, 1751.

Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,
Expertus metuit. HOR.

To court the great ones, and to footh their pride,
Seems a fweet tafk to thofe that never tried;
But thofe that have, know well that danger's near. CREECH.

THE SCIENCES having long feen their votaries labouring for the benefit of mankind without reward, put up their petition to *Jupiter* for a more equitable diftribution of riches and honours. *Jupiter* was moved at their complaints, and touched with the approaching miferies of men, whom the SCIENCES, wearied with perpetual ingratitude, were now threatening to forfake, and who would have been reduced by their departure to feed in dens upon the maft of trees, to hunt their prey in deferts, and to perifh under the paws of animals ftronger and fiercer than themfelves.

A fynod of the celeftials was therefore convened, in which it was refolved, that PATRONAGE fhould defcend to the affiftance of the SCIENCES. PATRONAGE was the daughter of ASTREA, by a mortal father, and had been educated in the fchool of TRUTH, by the Goddeffes, whom fhe was now appointed to protect. She had from her mother that dignity of afpect, which ftruck terror into falfe merit, and from her miftrefs that referve, which made her only acceffible to thofe whom the SCIENCES brought into her prefence.

She came down, with the general acclamation of all the powers that favour learning. Hope danced before her, and Liberality ftood at her fide, ready to fcatter by her direction the gifts which Fortune, who followed her, was commanded to fupply. As fhe advanced towards *Parnaffus*, the cloud which had long hung over it, was immediately difpelled. The fhades, before withered with drought, fpread their original verdure, and the flowers that had languifhed with chilnefs brightened their colours, and invigorated their fcents; the Mufes tuned their harps and exerted their voices; and all the concert of nature welcomed her arrival.

On *Parnaffus* fhe fixed her refidence, in a palace raifed by the Sciences, and adorned with whatever could delight the eye, elevate the imagination, or enlarge the underftanding. Here fhe difperfed the gifts of Fortune with the impartiality of Justice, and the difcernment of Truth. Her gate ftood always open, and Hope fat at the portal, inviting to entrance all whom the Sciences numbered in their train. The court was therefore thronged with innumerable multitudes, of whom, though many returned difappointed, feldom any had confidence to complain; for Patronage was known to neglect few, but for want of the due claims to her regard. Thofe, therefore, who had folicited her favour without fuccefs, generally withdrew from publick notice, and either diverted their attention to meaner employments, or endeavoured to fupply their deficiencies by clofer application.

In time, however, the number of thofe who had mifcarried in their pretenfions grew fo great, that they

they became leſs aſhamed of their repulſes; and inſtead of hiding their diſgrace in retirement, began to beſiege the gates of the palace, and obſtruct the entrance of ſuch as they thought likely to be more careſſed. The deciſions of PATRONAGE, who was but half a Goddeſs, had been ſometimes erroneous; and though ſhe always made haſte to rectify her miſtakes, a few inſtances of her fallibility encouraged every one to appeal from her judgment to his own and that of his companions, who are always ready to clamour in the common cauſe, and elate each other with reciprocal applauſe.

HOPE was a ſteady friend to the diſappointed, and IMPUDENCE incited them to accept a ſecond invitation, and lay their claim again before PATRONAGE. They were again, for the moſt part, ſent back with ignominy, but found HOPE not alienated, and IMPUDENCE more reſolutely zealous; they therefore contrived new expedients, and hoped at laſt to prevail by their multitudes which were always increaſing, and their perſeverance which HOPE and IMPUDENCE forbad them to relax.

PATRONAGE having been long a ſtranger to the heavenly aſſemblies, began to degenerate towards terreſtrial nature, and forget the precepts of JUSTICE and TRUTH. Inſtead of confining her friendſhip to the SCIENCES, ſhe ſuffered herſelf, by little and little, to contract an acquaintance with PRIDE, the ſon of FALSEHOOD, by whoſe embraces ſhe had two daughters, FLATTERY and CAPRICE. FLATTERY was nurſed by LIBERALITY, and CAPRICE by FORTUNE, without any aſſiſtance from the leſſons of the SCIENCES.

PATRONAGE

PATRONAGE began openly to adopt the ſentiments and imitate the manners of her huſband, by whoſe opinion ſhe now directed her deciſions with very little heed to the precepts of TRUTH; and as her daughters continually gained upon her affections, the SCIENCES loſt their influence, till none found much reaſon to boaſt of their reception, but thoſe whom CAPRICE or FLATTERY conducted to her throne.

The throngs who had ſo long waited, and ſo often been diſmiſſed for want of recommendation from the SCIENCES, were delighted to ſee the power of thoſe rigorous Goddeſſes tending to its extinction. Their patroneſſes now renewed their encouragements. HOPE ſmiled at the approach of CAPRICE, and IMPUDENCE was always at hand to introduce her clients to FLATTERY.

PATRONAGE had now learned to procure herſelf reverence by ceremonies and formalities, and inſtead of admitting her petitioners to an immediate audience, ordered the antechamber to be erected, called among mortals, the *Hall of Expectation*. Into this hall the entrance was eaſy to thoſe whom IMPUDENCE had conſigned to FLATTERY, and it was therefore crowded with a promiſcuous throng, aſſembled from every corner of the earth, preſſing forward with the utmoſt eagerneſs of deſire, and agitated with all the anxieties of competition.

They entered this general receptacle with ardour and alacrity, and made no doubt of ſpeedy acceſs, under the conduct of FLATTERY, to the preſence of PATRONAGE. But it generally happened that they were here left to their deſtiny, for the inner doors

were committed to CAPRICE, who opened and ſhut them, as it ſeemed, by chance, and rejected or admitted without any ſettled rule of diſtinction. In the mean time, the miſerable attendants were left to wear out their lives in alternate exultation and dejection, delivered up to the ſport of SUSPICION, who was always whiſpering into their ear deſigns againſt them which were never formed, and of ENVY, who diligently pointed out the good fortune of one or other of their competitors. INFAMY flew round the hall, and ſcattered mildews from her wings, with which every one was ſtained; REPUTATION followed her with ſlower flight, and endeavoured to hide the blemiſhes with paint, which was immediately bruſhed away, or ſeparated of itſelf, and left the ſtains more viſible; nor were the ſpots of INFAMY ever effaced, but with limpid water effuſed by the hand of TIME from a well which ſprung up beneath the throne of TRUTH.

It frequently happened that SCIENCE, unwilling to loſe the ancient prerogative of recommending to PATRONAGE, would lead her followers into the *Hall of Expectation*; but they were ſoon diſcouraged from attending, for not only ENVY and SUSPICION inceſſantly tormented them, but IMPUDENCE conſidered them as intruders, and incited INFAMY to blacken them. They therefore quickly retired, but ſeldom without ſome ſpots which they could ſcarcely waſh away, and which ſhewed that they had once waited in the *Hall of Expectation*.

The reſt continued to expect the happy moment, at which CAPRICE ſhould beckon them to approach; and endeavour to propitiate her, not with *Homerical* harmony,

harmony, the reprefentation of great actions, or the recital of noble fentiments, but with foft and voluptuous melody, intermingled with the praifes of PATRONAGE and PRIDE, by whom they were heard at once with pleafure and contempt.

Some were indeed admitted by CAPRICE, when they leaft expected it, and heaped by PATRONAGE with the gifts of FORTUNE, but they were from that time chained to her footftool, and condemned to regulate their lives by her glances and her nods; they feemed proud of their manacles, and feldom complained of any drudgery, however fervile, or any affront, however contemptuous; yet they were often, notwithftanding their obedience, feized on a fudden by CAPRICE, divefted of their ornaments, and thruft back into the *Hall of Expectation*.

Here they mingled again with the tumult, and all, except a few whom experience had taught to feek happinefs in the regions of liberty, continued to fpend hours, and days, and years, courting the fmile of CAPRICE by the arts of FLATTERY; till at length new crowds preffed in upon them, and drove them forth at different outlets into the habitations of DISEASE, and SHAME, and POVERTY, and DESPAIR, where they paffed the reft of their lives in narratives of promifes and breaches of faith, of joys and forrows, of hopes and difappointments.

The SCIENCES, after a thoufand indignities, retired from the palace of PATRONAGE, and having long wandered over the world in grief and diftrefs, were led at laft to the cottage of INDEPENDENCE, the daughter of FORTITUDE; where they were taught by PRUDENCE and PARSIMONY to fupport themfelves in dignity and quiet.

NUMB. 92. SATURDAY, *February* 2, 1751.

Jam nunc minaci murmure cornuum
Perſtringis aures, jam litui ſtrepunt. HOR.

Lo! now the clarion's voice I hear,
Its threatning murmurs pierce mine ear;
And in thy lines with brazen breath
The trumpet ſounds the charge of death. FRANCIS.

IT has been long obſerved, that the idea of beauty is vague and undefined, different in different minds, and diverſified by time or place. It has been a term hitherto uſed to ſignify that which pleaſes us we know not why, and in our approbation of which we can juſtify ourſelves only by the concurrence of numbers, without much power of enforcing our opinion upon others by any argument, but example and authority. It is, indeed, ſo little ſubject to the examinations of reaſon, that *Paſchal* ſuppoſes it to end where demonſtration begins, and maintains, that without incongruity and abſurdity we cannot ſpeak of *geometrical beauty*.

To trace all the ſources of that various pleaſure which we aſcribe to the agency of beauty, or to diſentangle all the perceptions involved in its idea, would, perhaps, require a very great part of the life of *Ariſtotle* or *Plato*. It is, however, in many caſes, apparent that this quality is merely relative and comparative; that we pronounce things beautiful becauſe they have ſomething which we agree, for what-

whatever reafon, to call beauty, in a greater degree than we have been accuftomed to find it in other things of the fame kind; and that we transfer the epithet as our knowledge increafes and appropriate it to higher excellence, when higher excellence comes within our view.

Much of the beauty of writing is of this kind; and therefore *Boileau* juftly remarks, that the books which have ftood the teft of time, and been admired through all the changes which the mind of man has fuffered from the various revolutions of knowledge, and the prevalence of contrary cuftoms, have a better claim to our regard than any modern can boaft, becaufe the long continuance of their reputation proves that they are adequate to our faculties, and agreeable to nature.

It is, however, the tafk of criticifm to eftablifh principles; to improve opinion into knowledge; and to diftinguifh thofe means of pleafing which depend upon known caufes and rational deduction, from the namelefs and inexplicable elegancies which appeal wholly to the fancy, from which we feel delight, but know not how they produce it, and which may well be termed the enchantreffes of the foul. Criticifm reduces thofe regions of literature under the dominion of fcience, which have hitherto known only the anarchy of ignorance, the caprices of fancy, and the tyranny of prefcription.

There is nothing in the art of verfifying fo much expofed to the power of imagination as the accommodation of the found to the fenfe, or the reprefentation of particular images, by the flow of the verfe

in which they are expreſſed. Every ſtudent has innumerable paſſages, in which he, and perhaps he alone, diſcovers ſuch reſemblances; and ſince the attention of the preſent race of poetical readers ſeems particularly turned upon this ſpecies of elegance, I ſhall endeavour to examine how much theſe conformities have been obſerved by the poets, or directed by the criticks, how far they can be eſtabliſhed upon nature and reaſon, and on what occaſions they have been practiſed by *Milton*.

Homer, the father of all poetical beauty, has been particularly celebrated by *Dionyſius* of *Halicarnaſſus*, as *he that, of all the poets, exhibited the greateſt variety of ſound*; *for there are*, ſays he, *innumerable paſſages, in which length of time, bulk of body, extremity of paſſion, and ſtillneſs of repoſe*; *or, in which, on the contrary, brevity, ſpeed, and eagerneſs, are evidently marked out by the ſound of the ſyllables. Thus the anguiſh and ſlow pace with which the blind* Polypheme *groped out with his hands the entrance of his cave, are perceived in the cadence of the verſes which deſcribe it.*

> Κύκλωψ δὲ στενάχων τε καὶ ὠδίνων ὀδύνησι,
> Χερσὶ ψηλαφόων——
>
> Mean time the *cyclop* raging with his wound,
> Spreads his wide arms, and ſearches round and round.
>
> POPE.

The critick then proceeds to ſhew, that the efforts of *Achilles* ſtruggling in his armour againſt the current of a river, ſometimes reſiſting and ſometimes yielding, may be perceived in the eliſions of the ſyllables,

the ſlow ſucceſſion of the feet, and the ſtrength of the conſonants.

> Δεινον δ' αμφ' Αχιλῆα κυκώμενον ἵςατο κῦμα.
> Ὦθει δ' ἐν σάκεϊ πίπ]ων ῥοῷ· ὀυδὲ πόδεσσιν
> Ἔσκε ςηρίξασθαι.———

> So oft the ſurge, in watry mountains ſpread,
> Beats on his back, or burſts upon his head,
> Yet dauntleſs ſtill the adverſe flood he braves,
> And ſtill indignant bounds above the waves.
> Tir'd by the tides, his knees relax with toil;
> Waſh'd from beneath him, ſlides the ſlimy ſoil. POPE.

When *Homer* deſcribes the cruſh of men daſhed againſt a rock, he collects the moſt unpleaſing and harſh ſounds.

> Σὺν δὲ δύω μάρψας, ὥςε σκύλακας ποτὶ γαιη
> Κόπ]'· ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν.

> ———His bloody hand
> Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
> And daſh'd like dogs againſt the ſtony floor:
> The pavement ſwims with brains and mingled gore.
> POPE.

And when he would place before the eyes ſomething dreadful and aſtoniſhing, he makes choice of the ſtrongeſt vowels, and the letters of moſt difficult utterance.

> Τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργὼ βλοσυρῶπις ἐςεφάνω]ο
> Δεινον δερκομένη· περὶ δὲ Δεῖμος τε Φόβος τε.

> Tremendous *Gorgon* frown'd upon its field,
> And circling terrors fill'd th' expreſſive ſhield. POPE.

Many other examples *Dionyſius* produces; but theſe will ſufficiently ſhew, that either he was fanciful, or we have loſt the genuine pronunciation; for I know not whether, in any one of theſe inſtances, ſuch ſimilitude can be diſcovered. It ſeems, indeed, probable, that the veneration with which *Homer* was read, produced many ſuppoſititious beauties; for though it is certain, that the ſound of many of his verſes very juſtly correſponds with the things expreſſed, yet when the force of his imagination, which gave him full poſſeſſion of every object, is conſidered, together with the flexibility of his language, of which the ſyllables might be often contracted or dilated at pleaſure, it will ſeem unlikely that ſuch conformity ſhould happen leſs frequently even without deſign.

It is not however to be doubted, that *Virgil*, who wrote amidſt the light of criticiſm, and who owed ſo much of his ſucceſs to art and labour, endeavoured, among other excellencies, to exhibit this ſimilitude; nor has he been leſs happy in this than in the other graces of verſification. This felicity of his numbers was, at the revival of learning, diſplayed with great elegance by *Vida*, in his Art of Poetry.

Haud ſatis eſt illis utcunque claudere verſum.——
Omnia ſed numeris vocum concordibus aptant,
Atque ſono quæcunque canunt imitantur, & apta
Verborum facie, & quæſito carminis ore.
Nam diverſa opus eſt veluti dare verſibus ora,——
Hic melior motuque pedum, & pernicibus alis,
Molle viam tacito lapſu per levia radit:
Ille autem membris, ac mole ignavius ingens

Incedit

Incedit tardo molimine ſubſidendo.
Ecce aliquis ſubit egregio pulcherrimus ore,
Cui lætum membris Venus omnibus afflat honorem.
Contra alius rudis, informes oſtendit & artus,
Hirſutumque ſupercilium, ac caudam ſinuoſam,
Ingratus viſu, ſonitu illætabilis ipſo.——
Ergo ubi jam nautæ ſpumas ſalis ære ruentes
Incubuere mari, videas ſpumare reductis
Convulſum remis, roſtriſque ſtridentibus æquor.
Tunc longe ſale ſaxa ſonant, tunc & freta ventis
Incipiunt agitata tumeſcere: littore fluctus
Illidunt rauco, atque refracta remurmurat unda
Ad ſcopulos, cumulo inſequitur præruptus aquæ mons.—
Cum vero ex alto ſpeculatus cærula Nereus
Leniit in morem ſtagni, placidæque paludis,
Labitur uncta vadis abies, natat uncta carina.——
Verba etiam res exiguas anguſta ſequuntur,
Ingenteſque juvant ingentia: cuncta gigantem
Vaſta decent, vultus immanes, pectora lata,
Et magni membrorum artus, magna oſſa lacertique.
Atque adeo, ſiquid geritur molimine magno,
Adde moram, & pariter tecum quoque verba laborem
Segnia: ſeu quando vi multa gleba coactis
Æternum frangenda bidentibus, æquore ſeu cum
Cornua velatarum obvertimus antennarum.
At mora ſi fuerit damno, properare jubebo.
Si ſe forte cava extulerit mala vipera terra,
Tolle moras, cape ſaxa manu, cape robora, paſtor;
Ferte citi flammas, date tela, repellite peſtem.
Ipſe etiam verſus ruat, in præcepſque feratur,
Immenſo cum præcipitans ruit Oceano nox,
Aut cum perculſus graviter procumbit humi bos,
Cumque etiam requies rebus datur, ipſa quoque ultro
Carmina pauliſper curſu ceſſare videbis
In medio interrupta: quiêrunt cum freta ponti,
Poſtquam auræ poſuere, quieſcere protinus ipſum
Cernere erit, mediiſque incæptis ſiſtere verſum.

Quid dicam, ſenior cum telum imbelle ſine ictu
Invalidus jacit, & defectis viribus æger?
Num quoque tum verſus ſegni pariter pede languet:
Sanguis hebet, frigent effœtæ in corpore vires.
Fortem autem juvenem deceat prorumpere in arces,
Evertiſſe domos, præfractaque quadrupedantum
Pectora pectoribus perrumpere, ſternere turres
Ingentes, totoque, ferum dare funera campo.

'Tis not enough his verſes to complete,
In meaſure, number, or determin'd feet.
To all, proportion'd terms he muſt diſpenſe,
And make the ſound a picture of the ſenſe;
The correſpondent words exactly frame,
The look, the features, and the mien the ſame.
With rapid feet and wings, without delay,
This ſwiftly flies, and ſmoothly ſkims away:
This blooms with youth and beauty in his face,
And *Venus* breathes on ev'ry limb a grace;
That, of rude form, his uncouth members ſhows,
Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows;
His monſtrous tail in many a fold and wind,
Voluminous and vaſt, curls up behind;
At once the image and the lines appear,
Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear.
Lo! when the ſailors ſteer the pond'rous ſhips,
And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps,
Incumbent on the main that roars around,
Beneath the lab'ring oars the waves reſound;
The prows wide echoing thro' the dark profound.
To the loud call each diſtant rock replies;
Toſt by the ſtorm the tow'ring ſurges riſe;
While the hoarſe ocean beats the ſounding ſhore,
Daſh'd from the ſtrand, the flying waters roar.
Flaſh at the ſhock, and gathering in a heap,
The liquid mountains riſe, and over-hang the deep.
But when blue *Neptune* from his car ſurveys,
And calms at one regard the raging ſeas,

Stretch'd

Stretch'd like a peaceful lake the deep ſubſides,
And the pitch'd veſſel o'er the ſurface glides.
When things are ſmall, the terms ſhould ſtill be ſo;
For low words pleaſe us, when the theme is low.
But when ſome giant, horrible and grim,
Enormous in his gait, and vaſt in ev'ry limb,
Stalks tow'ring on; the ſwelling words muſt riſe
In juſt proportion to the monſter's ſize.
If ſome large weight his huge arms ſtrive to ſhove,
The verſe too labours; the throng'd words ſcarce move.
When each ſtiff clod beneath the pond'rous plough
Crumbles and breaks, th' encumber'd lines muſt flow.
Nor leſs, when pilots catch the friendly gales,
Unfurl their ſhrouds, and hoiſt the wide-ſtretch'd ſails.
But if the poem ſuffers from delay,
Let the lines fly precipitate away,
And when the viper iſſues from the brake,
Be quick; with ſtones, and brands, and fire, attack
His riſing creſt, and drive the ſerpent back.
When night deſcends, or ſtun'd by num'rous ſtrokes,
And groaning, to the earth drops the vaſt ox;
The line too ſinks with correſpondent ſound,
Flat with the ſteer, and headlong to the ground.
When the wild waves ſubſide, and tempeſts ceaſe,
And huſh the roarings of the ſea to peace;
So oft we ſee the interrupted ſtrain
Stop'd in the midſt—and with the ſilent main
Pauſe for a ſpace—at laſt it glides again.
When *Priam* ſtrains his aged arms, to throw
His unavailing jav'line at the foe;
(His blood congeal'd, and ev'ry nerve unſtrung)
Then with the theme complies the artful ſong;
Like him, the ſolitary numbers flow,
Weak, trembling, melancholy, ſtiff and ſlow.
Not ſo young *Pyrrhus*, who with rapid force
Beats down embattled armies in his courſe.

The raging youth on trembling *Ilion* falls,
Burſts her ſtrong gates, and ſhakes her lofty walls;
Provokes his flying courſer to the ſpeed,
In full career to charge the warlike ſteed:
He piles the field with mountains of the ſlain;
He pours, he ſtorms, he thunders thro' the plain. PITT.

From the *Italian* gardens *Pope* ſeems to have tranſplanted this flower, the growth of happier climates, into a ſoil leſs adapted to its nature, and leſs favourable to its increaſe.

Soft is the ſtrain when *Zephyr* gently blows,
And the ſmooth ſtream in ſmoother numbers flows;
But when loud billows laſh the ſounding ſhore,
The hoarſe rough verſe ſhould like the torrent roar.
When *Ajax* ſtrives ſome rock's vaſt weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move ſlow;
Not ſo when ſwift *Camilla* ſcours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and ſkims along the main.

From theſe lines, laboured with great attention, and celebrated by a rival wit, may be judged what can be expected from the moſt diligent endeavours after this imagery of ſound. The verſe intended to repreſent the whiſper of the vernal breeze, muſt be confeſſed not much to excel in ſoftneſs or volubility; and the ſmooth ſtream runs with a perpetual claſh of jarring conſonants. The noiſe and turbulence of the torrent is, indeed, diſtinctly imaged, for it requires very little ſkill to make our language rough; but in theſe lines, which mention the effort of *Ajax*, there is no particular heavineſs, obſtruction, or delay. The ſwiftneſs of *Camilla* is rather con-

contrasted than exemplified; why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they, therefore, naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the *Alexandrine*, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending*, one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.

These rules and these examples have taught our present criticks to enquire very studiously and minutely into sounds and cadences. It is, therefore, useful to examine with what skill they have proceeded; what discoveries they have made; and whether any rules can be established which may guide us hereafter in such researches.

NUMB. 93. TUESDAY, *February* 5, 1751.

——*Experiar quid concedatur in illos*
Quorum flaminiâ tegitur cinis atque Latinâ. JUV.

More safely truth to urge her claim presumes,
On names now found alone on books and tombs.

THERE are few books on which more time is spent by young students, than on treatises which deliver the characters of authors; nor any which oftener deceive the expectation of the reader, or fill his mind with more opinions which the progress of his studies and the encrease of his knowledge oblige him to resign.

Baillet has introduced his collection of the decisions of the learned, by an enumeration of the prejudices which mislead the critick, and raise the passions in rebellion against the judgment. His catalogue, though large, is imperfect; and who can hope to complete it? The beauties of writing have been observed to be often such as cannot in the present state of human knowledge be evinced by evidence, or drawn out into demonstrations; they are therefore wholly subject to the imagination, and do not force their effects upon a mind preoccupied by unfavourable sentiments, nor overcome the counter-action of a false principle or of stubborn partiality.

To convince any man against his will is hard, but to please him against his will is justly pronounced by *Dryden* to be above the reach of human abilities.

abilities. Intereſt and paſſion will hold out long againſt the cloſeſt ſiege of diagrams and ſyllogiſms, but they are abſolutely impregnable to imagery and ſentiment; and will for ever bid defiance to the moſt powerful ſtrains of *Virgil* or *Homer*, though they may give way in time to the batteries of *Euclid* or *Archimedes*.

In truſting therefore to the ſentence of a critick, we are in danger not only from that vanity which exalts writers too often to the dignity of teaching what they are yet to learn, from that negligence which ſometimes ſteals upon the moſt vigilant caution, and that fallibility to which the condition of nature has ſubjected every human underſtanding; but from a thouſand extrinſick and accidental cauſes, from every thing which can excite kindneſs or malevolence, veneration or contempt.

Many of thoſe who have determined with great boldneſs, upon the various degrees of literary merit, may be juſtly ſuſpected of having paſſed ſentence, as *Seneca* remarks of *Claudius*,

> *Una tantum parte audita,*
> *Sæpe et nulla,*

without much knowledge of the cauſe before them: for it will not eaſily be imagined of *Langbane*, *Borrichitus*, or *Rapin*, that they had very accurately peruſed all the books which they praiſe or cenſure; or that, even if nature and learning had qualified them for judges, they could read for ever with the attention neceſſary to juſt criticiſm. Such performances, however, are not wholly without their uſe; for they are commonly juſt echoes to the voice of fame, and

transmit

tranſmit the general ſuffrage of mankind when they have no particular motives to ſuppreſs it.

Criticks, like the reſt of mankind, are very frequently miſled by intereſt. The bigotry with which editors regard the authors whom they illuſtrate or correct, has been generally remarked. *Dryden* was known to have written moſt of his critical diſſertations only to recommend the work upon which he then happened to be employed; and *Addiſon* is ſuſpected to have denied the expediency of poetical juſtice, becauſe his own *Cato* was condemned to periſh in a good cauſe.

There are prejudices which authors, not otherwiſe weak or corrupt, have indulged without ſcruple; and perhaps ſome of them are ſo complicated with our natural affections, that they cannot eaſily be diſintangled from the heart. Scarce any can hear with impartiality a compariſon between the writers of his own and another country; and though it cannot, I think, be charged equally on all nations, that they are blinded with this literary patriotiſm, yet there are none that do not look upon their authors with the fondneſs of affinity, and eſteem them as well for the place of their birth, as for their knowledge or their wit. There is, therefore, ſeldom much reſpect due to comparative criticiſm, when the competitors are of different countries, unleſs the judge is of a nation equally indifferent to both. The *Italians* could not for a long time believe, that there was any learning beyond the mountains; and the *French* ſeem generally perſuaded, that there are no wits or reaſoners equal to their own. I can ſcarcely conceive that if *Scaliger* had not conſidered himſelf as allied to *Vir-*

gil, by being born in the ſame country, he would have found his works ſo much ſuperior to thoſe of *Homer*, or have thought the controverſy worthy of ſo much zeal, vehemence, and acrimony.

There is, indeed, one prejudice, and only one, by which it may be doubted whether it is any diſhonour to be ſometimes miſguided. Criticiſm has ſo often given occaſion to the envious and ill-natured of gratifying their malignity, that ſome have thought it neceſſary to recommend the virtue of candour without reſtriction, and to preclude all future liberty of cenſure. Writers poſſeſſed with this opinion are continually enforcing civility and decency, recommending to criticks the proper diffidence of themſelves, and inculcating the veneration due to celebrated names.

I am not of opinion that theſe profeſſed enemies of arrogance and ſeverity have much more benevolence or modeſty than the reſt of mankind; or that they feel in their own hearts, any other intention than to diſtinguiſh themſelves by their ſoftneſs and delicacy. Some are modeſt becauſe they are timorous, and ſome are laviſh of praiſe becauſe they hope to be repaid.

There is indeed ſome tenderneſs due to living writers, when they attack none of thoſe truths which are of importance to the happineſs of mankind, and have committed no other offence than that of betraying their own ignorance or dulneſs. I ſhould think it cruelty to cruſh an inſect who had provoked me only by buzzing in my ear; and would not willingly interrupt the dream of harmleſs ſtupidity, or deſtroy the jeſt which makes its author laugh. Yet

I am

I am far from thinking this tenderneſs univerſally neceſſary; for he that writes may be conſidered as a kind of general challenger, whom every one has a right to attack; ſince he quits the common rank of life, ſteps forward beyond the liſts, and offers his merit to the publick judgment. To commence author is to claim praiſe, and no man can juſtly aſpire to honour, but at the hazard of diſgrace.

But whatever be decided concerning contemporaries, whom he that knows the treachery of the human heart, and conſiders how often we gratify our own pride or envy under the appearance of contending for elegance and propriety, will find himſelf not much inclined to diſturb; there can ſurely be no exemptions pleaded to ſecure them from criticiſm, who can no longer ſuffer by reproach, and of whom nothing now remains but their writings and their names. Upon theſe authors the critick is undoubtedly at full liberty to exerciſe the ſtricteſt ſeverity, ſince he endangers only his own fame, and, like *Æneas* when he drew his ſword in the infernal regions, encounters phantoms which cannot be wounded. He may indeed pay ſome regard to eſtabliſhed reputation; but he can by that ſhew of reverence conſult only his own ſecurity, for all other motives are now at an end.

The faults of a writer of acknowledged excellence are more dangerous, becauſe the influence of his example is more extenſive; and the intereſt of learning requires that they ſhould be diſcovered and ſtigmatized, before they have the ſanction of antiquity conferred upon them, and become precedents of indiſputable authority.

It

It has, indeed, been advanced by *Addiſon*, as one of the characteriſticks of a true critick, that he points out beauties rather than faults. But it is rather natural to a man of learning and genius, to apply himſelf chiefly to the ſtudy of writers who have more beauties than faults to be diſplayed: for the duty of criticiſm is neither to depreciate, nor dignify by partial repreſentations, but to hold out the light of reaſon, whatever it may diſcover; and to promulgate the determinations of truth, whatever ſhe ſhall dictate.

NUMB. 94. SATURDAY, *February* 9, 1751.

——Bonus atque fidus
Judex—per obſtantes catervas
Explicuit ſua victor arma. HOR.

Perpetual magiſtrate is he
Who keeps ſtrict juſtice full in ſight;
Who bids the crowd at awful diſtance gaze,
And virtue's arms victoriouſly diſplays. FRANCIS.

THE reſemblance of poetick numbers, to the ſubject which they mention or deſcribe, may be conſidered as general or particular; as conſiſting in the flow and ſtructure of a whole paſſage taken together, or as compriſed in the ſound of ſome emphatical and deſcriptive words, or in the cadence and harmony of ſingle verſes.

The general reſemblance of the ſound to the ſenſe is to be found in every language which admits of poetry,

poetry, in every author whose force of fancy enables him to impress images strongly on his own mind, and whose choice and variety of language readily supply him with just representations. To such a writer it is natural to change his measure with his subject, even without any effort of the understanding, or intervention of the judgment. To revolve jollity and mirth necessarily tunes the voice of a poet to gay and sprightly notes, as it fires his eye with vivacity; and reflection on gloomy situations and disastrous events, will sadden his numbers, as it will cloud his countenance. But in such passages there is only the similitude of pleasure to pleasure, and of grief to grief, without any immediate application to particular images. The same flow of joyous versification will celebrate the jollity of marriage, and the exultation of triumph; and the same languor of melody will suit the complaints of an absent lover, as of a conquered king.

It is scarcely to be doubted, that on many occasions we make the musick which we imagine ourselves to hear; that we modulate the poem by our own disposition, and ascribe to the numbers the effects of the sense. We may observe in life, that it is not easy to deliver a pleasing message in an unpleasing manner, and that we readily associate beauty and deformity with those whom for any reason we love or hate. Yet it would be too daring to declare that all the celebrated adaptations of harmony are chimerical; that *Homer* had no extraordinary attention to the melody of his verse when he described a nuptial festivity;

Νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, δ' ΐαδων ὑπολαμ πόμενάων,
Ηγίνεον ἀνὰ ἄςυ, πολυς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει;

Here ſacred pomp, and genial feaſt delight,
And ſolemn dance, and hymeneal rite;
Along the ſtreet the new-made brides are led,
With torches flaming, to the nuptial bed;
The youthful dancers in a circle bound
To the ſoft flute, and cittern's ſilver ſound. POPE.

that *Vida* was merely fanciful, when he ſuppoſed *Virgil* endeavouring to repreſent by uncommon ſweetneſs of numbers the adventitious beauty of *Æneas*;

Os, humeroſque Deo ſimilis: namque ipſe decoram
Cæſariem nato genitrix, lumenque juventæ
Purpureum, & lætos oculis afflârat honores;

The Trojan chief appear'd in open ſight,
Auguſt in viſage, and ſerenely bright.
His mother goddeſs, with her hands divine,
Had form'd his curling locks, and made his temples ſhine;
And giv'n his rolling eyes a ſparkling grace,
And breath'd a youthful vigour on his face. DRYDEN.

or that *Milton* did not intend to exemplify the harmony which he mentions:

Fountains! and ye that warble as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs! warbling tune his praiſe.

That *Milton* underſtood the force of ſounds well adjuſted, and knew the compaſs and variety of the ancient meaſures, cannot be doubted, ſince he was both a muſician and a critick; but he ſeems to have conſidered theſe conformities of cadence, as either not often attainable in our language, or as petty excel-

excellencies unworthy of his ambition; for it will not be found that he has always aſſigned the ſame caſt of numbers to the ſame objects. He has given in two paſſages very minute deſcriptions of angelick beauty; but though the images are nearly the ſame, the numbers will be found upon compariſon very different.

And now a ſtripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet ſuch as in his face
Youth ſmil'd celeſtial, and to ev'ry limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, ſo well he feign'd;
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd: wings he wore
Of many a colour'd plume, ſprinkled with gold.

Some of the lines of this deſcription are remarkably defective in harmony, and therefore by no means correſpondent with that ſymmetrical elegance and eaſy grace which they are intended to exhibit. The failure, however, is fully compenſated by the repreſentation of *Raphael*, which equally delights the ear and imagination.

A ſeraph wing'd: ſix wings he wore to ſhade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each ſhoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breaſt
With regal ornament: the middle pair
Girt like a ſtarry zone his waiſt, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs, with downy gold,
And colours dipp'd in heav'n: the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctur'd grain! like *Maia*'s ſon he ſtood,
And ſhook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide.——

The

The adumbration of particular and diſtinct images by an exact and perceptible reſemblance of ſound, is ſometimes ſtudied, and ſometimes caſual. Every language has many words formed in imitation of the noiſes which they ſignify. Such are *Stridor*, *Balo*, and *Beatus*, in *Latin*; and in *Engliſh* to *growl*, to *buzz*, to *hiſs*, and to *jarr*. Words of this kind give to a verſe the proper ſimilitude of ſound, without much labour of the writer, and ſuch happineſs is therefore to be attributed rather to fortune than ſkill; yet they are ſometimes combined with great propriety, and undeniably contribute to enforce the impreſſion of the idea. We hear the paſſing arrow in this line of *Virgil*;

> Et fugit *horrendum ſtridens* elapſa ſagitta;
>
> Th' impetuous arrow whizzes on the wing. POPE.

and the creaking of hell-gates, in the deſcription by *Milton*;

> Open fly
> With impetuous recoil and jarring ſound
> Th' infernal doors; and on their hinges grate
> Harſh thunder.

But many beauties of this kind, which the moderns, and perhaps the ancients, have obſerved, ſeem to be the product of blind reverence acting upon fancy. *Dionyſius* himſelf tells us, that the ſound of *Homer*'s verſes ſometimes exhibits the idea of corporeal bulk: is not this a diſcovery nearly approaching to that of the blind man, who after long enquiry into the nature of the ſcarlet colour, found that it

reprefented nothing fo much as the clangour of a trumpet? The reprefentative power of poetick harmony confifts of found and meafure; of the force of the fyllables fingly confidered, and of the time in which they are pronounced. Sound can refemble nothing but found, and time can meafure nothing but motion and duration.

The criticks, however, have ftruck out other fimilitudes; nor is there any irregularity of numbers which credulous admiration cannot difcover to be eminently beautiful. Thus the propriety of each of thefe lines has been celebrated by writers whofe opinion the world has reafon to regard,

Vertitur interea cœlum, & ruit oceano nox.——

Meantime the rapid heav'ns rowl'd down the light,
And on the fhaded ocean rufh'd the night. DRYDEN.

Sternitur, exanimifque tremens procumbit humi bos.——

Down drops the beaft, nor needs a fecond wound;
But fprawls in pangs of death, and fpurns the ground.
DRYDEN.

Parturiunt montes, nafcitur ridiculus mus.——
The mountains labour, and a moufe is born.
ROSCOMMON.

If all thefe obfervations are juft, there muft be fome remarkable conformity between the fudden fucceffion of night to day, the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a moufe from a mountain; fince we are told of all thefe images, that they are very ftrongly impreffed by the fame form and termination of the verfe.

We

We may, however, without giving way to enthuſiaſm, admit that ſome beauties of this kind may be produced. A ſudden ſtop at an unuſual ſyllable may image the ceſſation of action, or the pauſe of diſcourſe; and *Milton* has very happily imitated the repetitions of an echo:

I fled, and cried out *death:*
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and ſigh'd
From all her caves, and back reſounded *death.*

The meaſure or time in pronouncing may be varied ſo as very ſtrongly to repreſent, not only the modes of external motion, but the quick or ſlow ſucceſſion of ideas, and conſequently the paſſions of the mind. This at leaſt was the power of the ſpondaick and dactylick harmony, but our language can reach no eminent diverſities of ſound. We can indeed ſometimes, by encumbering and retarding the line, ſhew the difficulty of a progreſs made by ſtrong efforts and with frequent interruptions, or mark a ſlow and heavy motion. Thus *Milton* has imaged the toil of *Satan* ſtruggling through chaos.

So he with difficulty and labour hard
Mov'd on: with difficulty and labour he—

thus he has deſcribed the leviathans or whales;

Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait.

But he has at other times neglected ſuch repreſentations, as may be obſerved in the volubility and levity of theſe lines, which expreſs an action tardy and reluctant.

Deſcent and fall
To us is adverſe. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Inſulting, and purſu'd us through the deep,
With what confuſion and laborious flight
We ſunk thus low? Th' aſcent is eaſy then.

In another place, he deſcribes the gentle glide of ebbing waters in a line remarkably rough and halting;

Tripping ebb; that ſtole
With ſoft foot tow'rds the deep who now had ſtopp'd
His ſluices.

It is not indeed to be expected, that the ſound ſhould always aſſiſt the meaning, but it ought never to counteract it; and therefore *Milton* has here certainly committed a fault like that of the player, who looked on the earth when he implored the heavens, and to the heavens when he addreſſed the earth.

Thoſe who are determined to find in *Milton* an aſſemblage of all the excellencies which have ennobled all other poets, will perhaps be offended that I do not celebrate his verſification in higher terms; for there are readers who diſcover that in this paſſage,

So ſtretch'd out huge in length the arch fiend lay,

a *long* form is deſcribed in a *long* line; but the truth is, that length of body is only mentioned in a *ſlow* line, to which it has only the reſemblance of time to ſpace, of an hour to a maypole.

The ſame turn of ingenuity might perform wonders upon the deſcription of the ark:

Then from the mountains hewing timber tall,
Began to build a veſſel of huge bulk;
Meaſur'd by cubit, length, breadth, and height.

In theſe lines the poet apparently deſigns to fix the attention upon bulk; but this is effected by the enumeration, not by the meaſure; for what analogy can there be between modulations of ſound, and corporeal dimenſions?

Milton indeed ſeems only to have regarded this ſpecies of embelliſhment ſo far as not to reject it when it came unſought; which would often happen to a mind ſo vigorous, employed upon a ſubject ſo various and extenſive. He had, indeed, a greater and a nobler work to perform; a ſingle ſentiment of moral or religious truth, a ſingle image of life or nature, would have been cheaply loſt for a thouſand echoes of the cadence to the ſenſe; and he who had undertaken to *vindicate the ways of God to man*, might have been accuſed of neglecting his cauſe, had he laviſhed much of his attention upon ſyllables and ſounds.

NUMB. 95. TUESDAY, *February* 12, 1751.

Parcus Deorum cultor, & infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro; nunc retrorsum
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos. HOR.

A fugitive from heav'n and prayer,
I mock'd at all religious fear,
Deep scienc'd in the mazy lore
Of mad philosophy; but now
Hoist sail, and back by voyage plow
To that blest harbour, which I left before. FRANCIS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are many diseases both of the body and mind, which it is far easier to prevent than to cure, and therefore I hope you will think me employed in an office not useless either to learning or virtue, if I describe the symptoms of an intellectual malady, which, though at first it seizes only the passions, will, if not speedily remedied, infect the reason, and, from blasting the blossoms of knowledge, proceed in time to canker the root.

I was born in the house of discord. My parents were of unsuitable ages, contrary tempers, and different religions, and therefore employed the spirit and acuteness which nature had very liberally bestowed upon both, in hourly disputes, and incessant

contrivances to deteſt each other in the wrong; ſo that from the firſt exertions of reaſon I was bred a diſputant, trained up in all the arts of domeſtick ſophiſtry, initiated in a thouſand low ſtratagems, nimble ſhifts, and ſly concealments; verſed in all the turns of altercation, and acquainted with the whole diſcipline of *fending* and *proving*.

It was neceſſarily my care to preſerve the kindneſs of both the controvertiſts, and therefore I had very early formed the habit of ſuſpending my judgment, of hearing arguments with indifference, inclining as occaſion required to either ſide, and of holding myſelf undetermined between them till I knew for what opinion I might conveniently declare.

Thus, Sir, I acquired very early the ſkill of diſputation; and, as we naturally love the arts in which we believe ourſelves to excel, I did not let my abilities lie uſeleſs, nor ſuffer my dexterity to be loſt for want of practice. I engaged in perpetual wrangles with my ſchool-fellows, and was never to be convinced or repreſſed by any other arguments than blows, by which my antagoniſts commonly determined the controverſy, as I was, like the *Roman* orator, much more eminent for eloquence than courage.

At the univerſity I found my predominant ambition completely gratified by the ſtudy of logick. I impreſſed upon my memory a thouſand axioms, and ten thouſand diſtinctions, practiſed every form of ſyllogiſm, paſſed all my days in the ſchools of diſputation, and ſlept every night with *Smiglecius* on my pillow.

You

You will not doubt but ſuch a genius was ſoon raiſed to eminence by ſuch application: I was celebrated in my third year for the moſt artful opponent that the univerſity could boaſt, and became the terror and envy of all the candidates for philoſophical reputation.

My renown, indeed, was not purchaſed but at the price of all my time and all my ſtudies. I never ſpoke but to contradict, nor declaimed but in defence of a poſition univerſally acknowledged to be falſe, and therefore worthy, in my opinion, to be adorned with all the colours of falſe repreſentation, and ſtrengthened with all the art of fallacious ſubtilty.

My father, who had no other wiſh than to ſee his ſon richer than himſelf, eaſily concluded that I ſhould diſtinguiſh myſelf among the profeſſors of the law; and therefore, when I had taken my firſt degree, diſpatched me to the *Temple* with a paternal admonition, that I ſhould never ſuffer myſelf to feel ſhame, for nothing but modeſty could retard my fortune.

Vitiated, ignorant, and heady as I was, I had not yet loſt my reverence for virtue, and therefore could not receive ſuch dictates without horror; but however was pleaſed with his determination of my courſe of life, becauſe he placed me in the way that leads ſooneſt from the preſcribed walks of diſcipline and education, to the open fields of liberty and choice.

I was now in the place where every one catches the contagion of vanity, and ſoon began to diſtin-

guifh myfelf by fophifms and paradoxes. I declared war againft all received opinions and eftablifhed rules, and levelled my batteries particularly againft thofe univerfal principles which had ftood unfhaken in all the viciffitudes of literature, and are confidered as the inviolable temples of truth, or the impregnable bulwarks of fcience.

I applied myfelf chiefly to thofe parts of learning which have filled the world with doubt and perplexity, and could readily produce all the arguments relating to matter and motion, time and fpace, identity and infinity.

I was equally able and equally willing to maintain the fyftem of *Newton* or *Defcartes*, and favoured occafionally the hypothefis of *Ptolemy*, or that of *Copernicus*. I fometimes exalted vegetables to fenfe, and fometimes degraded animals to mechanifm.

Nor was I lefs inclined to weaken the credit of hiftory, or perplex the doctrines of polity. I was always of the party which I heard the company condemn.

Among the zealots of liberty I could harangue with great copioufnefs upon the advantages of abfolute monarchy, the fecrecy of its counfels, and the expedition of its meafures; and often celebrated the bleffings produced by the extinction of parties, and preclufion of debates.

Among the affertors of regal authority, I never failed to declaim with republican warmth upon the original charter of univerfal liberty, the corruption of courts, and the folly of voluntary fubmiffion to thofe whom nature has levelled with ourfelves.

I knew

I knew the defects of every ſcheme of government, and the inconveniencies of every law. I ſometimes ſhewed how much the condition of mankind would be improved, by breaking the world into petty ſovereignties, and ſometimes diſplayed the felicity and peace which univerſal monarchy would diffuſe over the earth.

To every acknowledged fact I found innumerable objections; for it was my rule, to judge of hiſtory only by abſtracted probability, and therefore I made no ſcruple of bidding defianee to teſtimony. I have more than once queſtioned the exiſtence of *Alexander the Great*; and having demonſtrated the folly of erecting edifices like the pyramids of *Egypt*, I frequently hinted my ſuſpicion that the world had been long deceived, and that they were to be found only in the narratives of travellers.

It had been happy for me could I have confined my ſcepticiſm to hiſtorical controverſies, and philoſophical diſquiſitions; but having now violated my reaſon, and accuſtomed myſelf to enquire not after proofs, but objections, I had perplexed truth with falſehood till my ideas were confuſed, my judgment embarraſſed, and my intellects diſtorted. The habit of conſidering every propoſition as alike uncertain, left me no teſt by which any tenet could be tried; every opinion preſented both ſides with equal evidence, and my fallacies began to operate upon my own mind in more important enquiries. It was at laſt the ſport of my vanity to weaken the obligations of moral duty, and efface the diſtinctions of good and evil, till I had deadened the ſenſe of

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conviction, and abandoned my heart to the fluctuations of uncertainty, without anchor and without compaſs, without ſatisfaction of curioſity, or peace of conſcience, without principles of reaſon, or motives of action.

Such is the hazard of repreſſing the firſt perceptions of truth, of ſpreading for diverſion the ſnares of ſophiſtry, and engaging reaſon againſt its own determinations.

The diſproportions of abſurdity grow leſs and leſs viſible, as we are reconciled by degrees to the deformity of a miſtreſs; and falſehood, by long uſe, is aſſimilated to the mind, as poiſon to the body.

I had ſoon the mortification of ſeeing my converſation courted only by the ignorant or wicked, by either boys who were enchanted by novelty, or wretches, who having long diſobeyed virtue and reaſon, were now deſirous of my aſſiſtance to dethrone them.

Thus alarmed, I ſhuddered at my own corruption, and that pride by which I had been ſeduced, contributed to reclaim me. I was weary of continual irreſolution, and a perpetual equipoiſe of the mind; and aſhamed of being the favourite of thoſe who were ſcorned and ſhunned by the reſt of mankind.

I therefore retired from all temptation to diſpute, preſcribed a new regimen to my underſtanding, and reſolved, inſtead of rejecting all eſtabliſhed opinions which I could not prove, to tolerate though not adopt all which I could not confute. I forbore to heat my imagination with needleſs controverſies, to diſcuſs queſtions confeſſedly uncertain, and re-

frained fteadily from gratifying my vanity by the fupport of falfehood.

By this method I am at length recovered from my argumental delirium, and find myfelf in the ftate of one awakened from the confufion and tumult of a feverifh dream. I rejoice in the new poffeffion of evidence and reality, and ftep on from truth to truth with confidence and quiet.

I am, SIR, &c.

PERTINAX.

NUMB. 96. SATURDAY, *February* 16, 1751.

Quod fi Platonis *mufa perfonat verum,*
Quod quifque difcit, immemor recordatur. BOETIUS.

Truth in Platonick ornaments bedeck'd,
Inforc'd we love, unheeding recollect.

IT is reported of the *Perfians*, by an ancient writer, that the fum of their education confifted in teaching youth *to ride, to fhoot with the bow, and to fpeak truth.*

The bow and the horfe were eafily maftered, but it would have been happy if we had been informed by what arts veracity was cultivated, and by what prefervatives a *Perfian* mind was fecured againft the temptations to falfehood.

There are, indeed, in the prefent corruption of mankind, many incitements to forfake truth; the need

need of palliating our own faults, and the convenience of impofing on the ignorance or credulity of others, fo frequently occur; fo many immediate evils are to be avoided, and fo many prefent gratifications obtained, by craft and delufion, that very few of thofe who are much entangled in life, have fpirit and conftancy fufficient to fupport them in the fteady practice of open veracity.

In order that all men may be taught to fpeak truth, it is neceffary that all likewife fhould learn to hear it; for no fpecies of falfehood is more frequent than flattery, to which the coward is betrayed by fear, the dependant by intereft, and the friend by tendernefs: Thofe who are neither fervile nor timorous, are yet defirous to beftow pleafure; and while unjuft demands of praife continue to be made, there will always be fome whom hope, fear, or kindnefs, will difpofe to pay them.

The guilt of falfehood is very widely extended, and many whom their confcience can fcarcely charge with ftooping to a lie, have vitiated the morals of others by their vanity, and patronized the vice which they believe themfelves to abhor.

Truth is, indeed, not often welcome for its own fake; it is generally unpleafing becaufe contrary to our wifhes and oppofite to our practice; and as our attention naturally follows our intereft, we hear unwillingly what we are afraid to know, and foon forget what we have no inclination to imprefs upon our memories.

For this reafon many arts of inftruction have been invented, by which the reluctance againft truth may be overcome; and as phyfick is given to children in

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confections, precepts have been hidden under a thousand appearances, that mankind may be bribed by pleasure to escape destruction.

While the world was yet in its infancy, Truth came among mortals from above, and Falsehood from below. Truth was the daughter of Jupiter and Wisdom; Falsehood was the progeny of Folly impregnated by the wind. They advanced with equal confidence to seize the dominion of the new creation, and as their enmity and their force were well known to the celestials, all the eyes of heaven were turned upon the contest.

Truth seemed conscious of superior power and juster claim, and therefore came on towering and majestick, unassisted and alone; Reason indeed always attended her, but appeared her follower, rather than companion. Her march was slow and stately, but her motion was perpetually progressive, and when once she had grounded her foot, neither gods nor men could force her to retire.

Falsehood always endeavoured to copy the mien and attitudes of Truth, and was very successful in the arts of mimickry. She was surrounded, animated, and supported by innumerable legions of appetites and passions, but, like other feeble commanders, was obliged often to receive law from her allies. Her motions were sudden, irregular, and violent; for she had no steadiness nor constancy. She often gained conquests by hasty incursions, which she never hoped to keep by her own strength, but maintained by the help of the passions, whom she generally found resolute and faithful.

It

It sometimes happened that the antagonists met in full opposition. In these encounters, FALSEHOOD always invested her head with clouds, and commanded FRAUD to place ambushes about her. In her left hand she bore the shield of IMPUDENCE, and the quiver of SOPHISTRY rattled on her shoulder. All the passions attended at her call; VANITY clapped her wings before, and OBSTINACY supported her behind. Thus guarded and assisted, she sometimes advanced against TRUTH, and sometimes waited the attack; but always endeavoured to skirmish at a distance, perpetually shifted her ground, and let fly her arrows in different directions; for she certainly found that her strength failed, whenever the eye of TRUTH darted full upon her.

TRUTH had the awful aspect though not the thunder of her father, and when the long continuance of the contest brought them near to one another, FALSEHOOD let the arms of SOPHISTRY fall from her grasp, and holding up the shield of IMPUDENCE with both her hands, sheltered herself amongst the passions.

TRUTH, though she was often wounded, always recovered in a short time; but it was common for the slightest hurt, received by FALSEHOOD, to spread its malignity to the neighbouring parts, and to burst open again when it seemed to have been cured.

FALSEHOOD, in a short time, found by experience that her superiority consisted only in the celerity of her course, and the changes of her posture. She therefore ordered SUSPICION to beat the ground before her, and avoided with great care to cross the

way of TRUTH, who, as ſhe never varied her point, but moved conſtantly upon the ſame line, was eaſily eſcaped by the oblique and deſultory movements, the quick retreats and active doubles which FALSEHOOD always practiſed, when the enemy began to raiſe terror by her approach.

By this procedure FALSEHOOD every hour encroached upon the world, and extended her empire through all climes and regions. Wherever ſhe carried her victories ſhe left the PASSIONS in full authority behind her; who were ſo well pleaſed with command, that they held out with great obſtinacy when TRUTH came to ſeize their poſts, and never failed to retard her progreſs, though they could not always ſtop it: They yielded at laſt with great reluctance, frequent rallies, and ſullen ſubmiſſion; and always inclined to revolt when TRUTH ceaſed to awe them by her immediate preſence.

TRUTH, who, when ſhe firſt deſcended from the heavenly palaces, expected to have been received by univerſal acclamation, cheriſhed with kindneſs, heard with obedience, and invited to ſpread her influence from province to province, now found, that whereever ſhe came, ſhe muſt force her paſſage. Every intellect was precluded by PREJUDICE, and every heart preoccupied by PASSION. She indeed advanced, but ſhe advanced ſlowly; and often loſt the conqueſts which ſhe left behind her, by ſudden inſurrections of the appetites, that ſhook off their allegiance, and ranged themſelves again under the banner of her enemy.

TRUTH, however, did not grow weaker by the ſtruggle, for her vigour was unconquerable; yet ſhe

was

was provoked to ſee herſelf thus baffled and impeded by an enemy, whom ſhe looked on with contempt, and who had no advantage but ſuch as ſhe owed to inconſtancy, weakneſs, and artifice. She therefore, in the anger of diſappointment, called upon her father JUPITER to re-eſtabliſh her in the ſkies, and leave mankind to the diſorder and miſery which they deſerved, by ſubmitting willingly to the uſurpation of FALSEHOOD.

JUPITER compaſſionated the world too much to grant her requeſt, yet was willing to eaſe her labours, and mitigate her vexation. He commanded her to conſult the muſes by what methods ſhe might obtain an eaſier reception, and reign without the toil of inceſſant war. It was then diſcovered, that ſhe obſtructed her own progreſs by the ſeverity of her aſpect, and the ſolemnity of her dictates; and that men would never willingly admit her, till they ceaſed to fear her, ſince by giving themſelves up to FALSEHOOD they ſeldom made any ſacrifice of their eaſe or pleaſure, becauſe ſhe took the ſhape that was moſt engaging, and always ſuffered herſelf to be dreſſed and painted by DESIRE. The muſes wove, in the loom of *Pallas*, a looſe and changeable robe, like that in which FALSEHOOD captivated her admirers; with this they inveſted TRUTH, and named her FICTION. She now went out again to conquer with more ſucceſs; for when ſhe demanded entrance of the PASSIONS, they often miſtook her for FALSEHOOD, and delivered up their charge: but when ſhe had once taken poſſeſſion, ſhe was ſoon diſrobed by REASON, and ſhone out, in her original form, with native effulgence and reſiſtleſs dignity.

NUMB. 97. TUESDAY, *February* 19, 1751.

Fœcunda culpæ ſecula nuptias
Primum inquinavere, & genus, & domos,
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit. HOR.

Fruitful of crimes, this age firſt ſtain'd
Their hapleſs offspring, and profan'd
The nuptial bed; from whence the woes,
Which various and unnumber'd roſe
From this polluted fountain head,
O'er *Rome* and o'er the nations ſpread. FRANCIS.

THE reader is indebted for this day's entertainment to an author from whom the age has received greater favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the paſſions to move at the command of virtue.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

WHEN the SPECTATOR was firſt publiſhed in ſingle papers, it gave me ſo much pleaſure, that it is one of the favourite amuſements of my age to recollect it; and when I reflect on the foibles of thoſe times, as deſcribed in that uſeful work, and compare them with the vices now reigning among us, I cannot but wiſh that you would oftener take cognizance of the manners of the better half of the human ſpecies, that if your precepts and obſervations be

be carried down to poſterity, the SPECTATORS may ſhew to the riſing generation what were the faſhionable follies of their grandmothers, the RAMBLER of their mothers, and that from both they may draw inſtruction and warning.

When I read thoſe SPECTATORS which took notice of the miſbehaviour of young women at church, by which they vainly hope to attract admirers, I uſed to pronounce ſuch forward young women SEEKERS, in order to diſtinguiſh them by a mark of infamy from thoſe who had patience and decency to ſtay till they were ſought.

But I have lived to ſee ſuch a change in the manners of women, that I would now be willing to compound with them for that name, although I then thought it diſgraceful enough, if they would deſerve no worſe; ſince now they are too generally given up to negligence of domeſtic buſineſs, to idle amuſements, and to wicked rackets, without any ſettled view at all but of ſquandering time.

In the time of the SPECTATOR, excepting ſometimes an appearance in the ring, ſometimes at a good and choſen play, ſometimes on a viſit at the houſe of a grave relation, the young ladies contented themſelves to be found employed in domeſtic duties; for then routes, drums, balls, aſſemblies, and ſuch like markets for women, were not known.

Modeſty and diffidence, gentleneſs and meekneſs, were looked upon as the appropriate virtues and characteriſtic graces of the ſex. And if a forward ſpirit puſhed itſelf into notice, it was expoſed in print as it deſerved.

The churches were almoſt the only places where ſingle women were to be ſeen by ſtrangers. Men went thither expecting to ſee them, and perhaps too much for that only purpoſe.

But ſome good often reſulted, however improper might be their motives. Both ſexes were in the way of their duty. The man muſt be abandoned indeed, who loves not goodneſs in another; nor were the young fellows of that age ſo wholly loſt to a ſenſe of right, as pride and conceit has ſince made them affect to be. When therefore they ſaw a fair-one, whoſe decent behaviour and cheerful piety ſhewed her earneſt in her firſt duties, they had the leſs doubt, judging politically only, that ſhe would have a conſcientious regard to her ſecond.

With what ardour have I ſeen watched for, the riſing of a kneeling beauty; and what additional charms has devotion given to her recommunicated features?

The men were often the better for what they heard. Even a *Saul* was once found propheſying among the prophets whom he had ſet out to deſtroy. To a man thus put into good humour by a pleaſing object, religion itſelf looked more amiable. The MEN SEEKERS of the SPECTATOR's time loved the holy place for the object's ſake, and loved the object for her ſuitable behaviour in it.

Reverence mingled with their love, and they thought that a young lady of ſuch good principles muſt be addreſſed only by the man who at leaſt made a ſhew of good principles, whether his heart was yet quite right or not.

Nor

Nor did the young lady's behaviour, at any time of the ſervice, leſſen this reverence. Her eyes were her own, her ears the preacher's. Women are always moſt obſerved when they ſeem themſelves leaſt to obſerve, or to lay out for obſervation. The eye of a reſpectful lover loves rather to receive confidence from the withdrawn eye of the fair-one, than to find itſelf obliged to retreat.

When a young gentleman's affection was thus laudably engaged, he purſued its natural dictates; keeping then was a rare, at leaſt a ſecret and ſcandalous vice, and a wife was the ſummit of his wiſhes. Rejection was now dreaded, and pre-engagement apprehended. A woman whom he loved, he was ready to think muſt be admired by all the world. His fears, his uncertainties, increaſed his love.

Every enquiry he made into the lady's domeſtick excellence, which, when a wife is to be choſen, will ſurely not be neglected, confirmed him in his choice. He opens his heart to a common friend, and honeſtly diſcovers the ſtate of his fortune. His friend applies to thoſe of the young lady, whoſe parents, if they approve his propoſals, diſcloſe them to their daughter.

She perhaps is not an abſolute ſtranger to the paſſion of the young gentleman. His eyes, his aſſiduities, his conſtant attendance at a church, whither, till of late, he uſed ſeldom to come, and a thouſand little obſervances that he paid her, had very probably firſt forced her to regard, and then inclined her to favour him.

That a young lady ſhould be in love, and the love of the young gentleman undeclared, is an heterodoxy which prudence, and even policy, muſt not allow. But thus applied to, ſhe is all reſignation to her parents. Charming reſignation, which inclination oppoſes not.

Her relations applaud her for her duty; friends meet; points are adjuſted; delightful perturbations, and hopes, and a few lover's fears, fill up the tedious ſpace, till an interview is granted; for the young lady had not made herſelf cheap at publick places.

The time of interview arrives. She is modeſtly reſerved; he is not confident. He declares his paſſion; the conſciouſneſs of her own worth, and his application to her parents, take from her any doubt of his ſincerity; and ſhe owns herſelf obliged to him for his good opinion. The enquiries of her friends into his character, have taught her that his good opinion deſerves to be valued.

She tacitly allows of his future viſits; he renews them; the regard of each for the other is confirmed; and when he preſſes for the favour of her hand, he receives a declaration of an entire acquieſcence with her duty, and a modeſt acknowledgment of eſteem for him.

He applies to her parents therefore for a near day; and thinks himſelf under obligation to them for the cheerful and affectionate manner with which they receive his agreeable application.

With this proſpect of future happineſs, the marriage is celebrated. Gratulations pour in from every quarter. Parents and relations on both ſides,

brought

brought acquainted in the courſe of the courtſhip, can receive the happy couple with countenances illumined, and joyful hearts.

The brothers, the ſiſters, the friends of one family, are the brothers, the ſiſters, the friends of the other. Their two families thus made one, are the world to the young couple.

Their home is the place of their principal delight, nor do they ever occaſionally quit it but they find the pleaſure of returning to it augmented in proportion to the time of their abſence from it.

Oh, Mr. RAMBLER! forgive the talkativeneſs of an old man! When I courted and married my *Lætitia*, then a blooming beauty, every thing paſſed juſt ſo! But how is the caſe now? The ladies, maidens, wives, and widows, are engroſſed by places of open reſort and general entertainment, which fill every quarter of the metropolis, and being conſtantly frequented, make home irkſome. Breakfaſting-places, dining-places; routes, drums, concerts, balls, plays, operas, maſquerades for the evening, and even for all night, and lately, publick ſales of the goods of broken houſekeepers, which the general diſſoluteneſs of manners has contributed to make very frequent, come in as another ſeaſonable relief to theſe modern time-killers.

In the ſummer there are in every country-town aſſemblies; *Tunbridge, Bath, Cheltenham, Scarborough!* What expence of dreſs and equipage is required to qualify the frequenters for ſuch emulous appearance?

By the natural infection of example, the loweſt people have places of ſix-penny reſort, and gaming-tables for pence. Thus ſervants are now induced to

fraud

fraud and diſhoneſty, to ſupport extravagance, and ſupply their loſſes.

As to the ladies who frequent thoſe publick places, they are not aſhamed to ſhew their faces wherever men dare go, nor bluſh to try who ſhall ſtare moſt impudently, or who ſhall laugh loudeſt on the publick walks.

The men who would make good huſbands, if they viſit thoſe places, are frighted at wedlock, and reſolve to live ſingle, except they are bought at a very high price. They can be ſpectators of all that paſſes, and, if they pleaſe, more than ſpectators, at the expence of others. The companion of an evening, and the companion for life, require very different qualifications.

Two thouſand pounds in the laſt age, with a domeſtick wife, would go farther than ten thouſand in this. Yet ſettlements are expected, that often, to a mercantile man eſpecially, ſink a fortune into uſeleſſneſs; and pin-money is ſtipulated for, which makes a wife independent, and deſtroys love, by putting it out of a man's power to lay any obligation upon her, that might engage gratitude, and kindle affection. When to all this the card-tables are added, how can a prudent man think of marrying?

And when the worthy men know not where to find wives, muſt not the ſex be left to the foplings, the coxcombs, the libertines of the age, whom they help to make ſuch? And need even theſe wretches marry to enjoy the converſation of thoſe who render their company ſo cheap?

And what, after all, is the benefit which the gay coquette obtains by her flutters? As ſhe is approachable

able by every man, without requiring, I will not ſay incenſe or adoration, but even common complaiſance, every fop treats her as upon the level, looks upon her light airs as invitations, and is on the watch to take the advantage: ſhe has companions indeed, but no lovers; for love is reſpectful, and timorous; and where among all her followers will ſhe find a huſband?

Set, dear Sir, before the youthful, the gay, the inconſiderate, the contempt as well as the danger to which they are expoſed. At one time or other, women, not utterly thoughtleſs, will be convinced of the juſtice of your cenſure, and the charity of your inſtruction.

But ſhould your expoſtulations and reproofs have no effect upon thoſe who are far gone in faſhionable folly, they may be retailed from their mouths to their nieces (marriage will not often have intitled theſe to daughters), when they, the meteors of a day, find themſelves elbowed off the ſtage of vanity by other flutterers; for the moſt admired women cannot have many *Tunbridge*, many *Bath* ſeaſons to blaze in; ſince even fine faces, often ſeen, are leſs regarded than new faces, the proper puniſhment of ſhowy girls, for rendering themſelves ſo impoliticly cheap.

I am, SIR,

Your ſincere admirer, &c.

NUMB. 98. SATURDAY, *February* 23, 1751.

Quæ nec Sarmentus *iniquas*
Cæsaris *ad mensas, nec vilis* Gabba *tulisset.* JUV.

Which not *Sarmentus* brook'd at *Cæsar*'s board,
Nor grov'ling *Gabba* from his haughty Lord.
ELPHINSTON.

To the AUTHOR *of the* RAMBLER.

Mr. RAMBLER,

YOU have often endeavoured to impress upon your readers an observation of more truth than novelty, that life passes, for the most part, in petty transactions; that our hours glide away in trifling amusements and slight gratifications; and that there very seldom emerges any occasion that can call forth great virtue or great abilities.

It very commonly happens that speculation has no influence on conduct. Just conclusions, and cogent arguments, formed by laborious study, and diligent enquiry, are often reposited in the treasuries of memory, as gold in the miser's chest, useless alike to others and himself. As some are not richer for the extent of their possessions, others are not wiser for the multitude of their ideas.

You have truly described the state of human beings, but it may be doubted whether you have accommodated your precepts to your description; whether you have not generally considered your readers

readers as influenced by the tragick paſſions, and ſuſceptible of pain or pleaſure only from powerful agents, and from great events.

To an author who writes not for the improvement of a ſingle art, or the eſtabliſhment of a controverted doctrine, but equally intends the advantage, and equally courts the peruſal of all the claſſes of mankind, nothing can juſtly ſeem unworthy of regard, by which the pleaſure of converſation may be increaſed, and the daily ſatisfactions of familiar life ſecured from interruption and diſguſt.

For this reaſon you would not have injured your reputation, if you had ſometimes deſcended to the minuter duties of ſocial beings, and enforced the obſervance of thoſe little civilities and ceremonious delicacies, which, inconſiderable as they may appear to the man of ſcience, and difficult as they may prove to be detailed with dignity, yet contribute to the regulation of the world, by facilitating the intercourſe between one man and another, and of which the *French* have ſufficiently teſtified their eſteem, by terming the knowledge and practice of them *Sçavoir vivre, the art of living.*

Politeneſs is one of thoſe advantages which we never eſtimate rightly but by the inconvenience of its loſs. Its influence upon the manners is conſtant and uniform, ſo that, like an equal motion, it eſcapes perception. The circumſtances of every action are ſo adjuſted to each other, that we do not ſee where any error could have been committed, and rather acquieſce in its propriety, than admire its exactneſs.

But as ſickneſs ſhews us the value of eaſe, a little familiarity with thoſe who were never taught to en-

deavour the gratification of others, but regulate their behaviour merely by their own will, will ſoon evince the neceſſity of eſtabliſhed modes and formalities to the happineſs and quiet of common life.

Wiſdom and virtue are by no means ſufficient, without the ſupplemental laws of good-breeding, to ſecure freedom from degenerating to rudeneſs, or ſelf-eſteem from ſwelling into inſolence; a thouſand incivilities may be committed, and a thouſand offices neglected, without any remorſe of conſcience, or reproach from reaſon.

The true effect of genuine politeneſs ſeems to be rather eaſe than pleaſure. The power of delighting muſt be conferred by nature, and cannot be delivered by precept, or obtained by imitation; but though it be the privilege of a very ſmall number to raviſh and to charm, every man may hope by rules and caution not to give pain, and may, therefore, by the help of good-breeding, enjoy the kindneſs of mankind, though he ſhould have no claim to higher diſtinctions.

The univerſal axiom in which all complaiſance is included, and from which flow all the formalities which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed in civiliſed nations, is, *That no man ſhould give any preference to himſelf.* A rule ſo comprehenſive and certain, that, perhaps, it is not eaſy for the mind to image an incivility, without ſuppoſing it to be broken.

There are, indeed, in every place ſome particular modes of the ceremonial part of good-breeding, which, being arbitrary and accidental, can be learned only by habitude and converſation; ſuch are the forms of ſalutation, the different gradations of reve-

rence, and all the adjuſtments of place and precedence. Theſe, however, may be often violated without offence, if it be ſufficiently evident, that neither malice nor pride contributed to the failure; but will not atone, however rigidly obſerved, for the tumour of inſolence, or petulance of contempt.

I have, indeed, not found among any part of mankind, leſs real and rational complaiſance, than among thoſe who have paſſed their time in paying and receiving viſits, in frequenting publick entertainments, in ſtudying the exact meaſures of ceremony, and in watching all the variations of faſhionable courteſy.

They know, indeed, at what hour they may beat the door of an acquaintance, how many ſteps they muſt attend him towards the gate, and what interval ſhould paſs before his viſit is returned; but ſeldom extend their care beyond the exterior and uneſſential parts of civility, nor refuſe their own vanity any gratification, however expenſive, to the quiet of another.

Trypherus is a man remarkable for ſplendour and expence; a man, that having been originally placed by his fortune and rank in the firſt claſs of the community, has acquired that air of dignity, and that readineſs in the exchange of compliments, which courts, balls, and levees, eaſily confer.

But *Trypherus*, without any ſettled purpoſes of malignity, partly by his ignorance of human nature, and partly by the habit of contemplating with great ſatisfaction his own grandeur and riches, is hourly

giving

giving difguft to thofe whom chance or expectation fubject to his vanity.

To a man whofe fortune confines him to a fmall houfe, he declaims upon the pleafure of fpacious apartments, and the convenience of changing his lodging-room in different parts of the year; tells him, that he hates confinement; and concludes, that if his chamber was lefs, he fhould never wake without thinking of a prifon.

To *Eucretas*, a man of birth equal to himfelf, but of much lefs eftate, he fhewed his fervices of plate, and remarked that fuch things were, indeed, nothing better than coftly trifles, but that no man muft pretend to the rank of a gentleman without them; and that for his part, if his eftate was fmaller, he fhould not think of enjoying but encreafing it, and would enquire out a trade for his eldeft fon.

He has, in imitation of fome more acute obferver than himfelf, collected a great many fhifts and artifices by which poverty is concealed; and among the ladies of fmall fortune, never fails to talk of frippery and flight filks, and the convenience of a general mourning.

I have been infulted a thoufand times with a catalogue of his pictures, his jewels, and his rarities, which, though he knows the humble neatnefs of my habitation, he feldom fails to conclude by a declaration, that wherever he fees a houfe meanly furnifhed, he defpifes the owner's tafte, or pities his poverty.

This, Mr. *Rambler*, is the practice of *Trypherus*, by which he is become the terror of all who

are leſs wealthy than himſelf, and has raiſed innumerable enemies without rivalry, and without malevolence.

Yet though all are not equally culpable with *Trypherus*, it is ſcarcely poſſible to find any man who does not frequently, like him, indulge his own pride by forcing others into a compariſon with himſelf when he knows the advantage is on his ſide, without conſidering that unneceſſarily to obtrude unpleaſing ideas, is a ſpecies of oppreſſion; and that it is little more criminal to deprive another of ſome real advantage, than to interrupt that forgetfulneſs of its abſence which is the next happineſs to actual poſſeſſion.

I am, &c.

EUTROPIUS.

Numb. 99. Tuesday, *February* 26, 1751.

Scilicet ingeniis aliqua eſt concordia junctis,
Et ſervat ſtudii fœdera quiſque ſui,
Ruſticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,
Rectorem dubiæ navita puppis amat. Ovid.

Congenial paſſions ſouls together bind,
And ev'ry calling mingles with its kind;
Soldier unites with ſoldier, ſwain with ſwain,
The mariner with him that roves the main. F. Lewis.

IT has been ordained by providence, for the conſervation of order in the immenſe variety of nature, and for the regular propagation of the ſeveral claſſes of life with which the elements are peopled, that every creature ſhould be drawn by ſome ſecret attraction to thoſe of his own kind; and that not only the gentle and domeſtick animals which naturally unite into companies, or cohabit by pairs, ſhould continue faithful to their ſpecies; but even thoſe ravenous and ferocious ſavages which *Ariſtotle* obſerves never to be gregarious, ſhould range mountains and deſerts in ſearch of one another, rather than pollute the world with a monſtrous birth.

As the perpetuity and diſtinction of the lower tribes of the creation require that they ſhould be determined to proper mates by ſome uniform motive of choice, or ſome cogent principle of inſtinct; it is neceſſary likewiſe, that man, whoſe wider capacity demands more gratifications, and who feels in himſelf innumerable wants, which a life of ſolitude cannot

cannot ſupply, and innumerable powers to which it cannot give employment. ſhould be led to ſuitable companions by particular influence; and among many beings of the ſame nature with himſelf, he may ſelect ſome for intimacy and tenderneſs, and improve the condition of his exiſtence, by ſuperadding friendſhip to humanity, and the love of individuals to that of the ſpecies.

Other animals are ſo formed, that they ſeem to contribute very little to the happineſs of each other, and know neither joy, nor grief, nor love, nor hatred, but as they are urged by ſome deſire immediately ſubſervient either to the ſupport of their own lives, or to the continuation of their race; they therefore ſeldom appear to regard any of the minuter diſcriminations which diſtinguiſh creatures of the ſame kind from one another.

But if man were to feel no incentives to kindneſs, more than his general tendency to congenial nature, *Babylon* or *London*, with all their multitudes, would have to him the deſolation of a wilderneſs; his affections, not compreſſed into a narrower compaſs, would vaniſh like elemental fire, in boundleſs evaporation; he would languiſh in perpetual inſenſibility, and though he might, perhaps, in the firſt vigour of youth, amuſe himſelf with the freſh enjoyments of life, yet, when curioſity ſhould ceaſe, and alacrity ſubſide, he would abandon himſelf to the fluctuations of chance, without expecting help againſt any calamity, or feeling any wiſh for the happineſs of others.

To love all men is our duty, ſo far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readineſs of oc-

casional kindneſs; but to love all equally is impoſſible; at leaſt impoſſible without the extinction of thoſe paſſions which now produce all our pains and all our pleaſures; without the diſuſe, if not the abolition of ſome of our faculties, and the ſuppeſſion of all our hopes and fears in apathy and indifference.

The neceſſities of our condition require a thouſand offices of tenderneſs, which mere regard for the ſpecies will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances which only the ſolicitude of friendſhip will diſcover and remedy, and which would remain for ever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity, were it only ſurveyed by the eye of general benevolence equally attentive to every miſery.

The great community of mankind is, therefore, neceſſarily broken into ſmaller independent ſocieties; theſe form diſtinct intereſts, which are too frequently oppoſed to each other, and which they who have entered into the league of particular governments falſely think it virtue to promote, however deſtructive to the happineſs of the reſt of the world.

Such unions are again ſeparated into ſubordinate claſſes and combinations, and ſocial life is perpetually branched out into minuter ſubdiviſions, till it terminates in the laſt ramifications of private friendſhip.

That friendſhip may at once be fond and laſting, it has been already obſerved in theſe papers, that a conformity of inclinations is neceſſary. No man can have much kindneſs for him by whom he does not believe himſelf eſteemed, and nothing ſo evidently proves eſteem as imitation.

That benevolence is always ſtrongeſt which ariſes from participation of the ſame pleaſures, ſince we

are naturally moſt willing to revive in our minds the memory of perſons, with whom the idea of enjoyment is connected.

It is commonly, therefore, to little purpoſe, that any one endeavours to ingratiate himſelf with ſuch as he cannot accompany in their amuſements and diverſions. Men have been known to riſe to favour and to fortune, only by being ſkilful in the ſports with which their patron happened to be delighted, by concurring with his taſte for ſome particular ſpecies of curioſities, by reliſhing the ſame wine, or applauding the ſame cookery.

Even thoſe whom wiſdom or virtue have placed above regard to ſuch petty recommendations, muſt nevertheleſs be gained by ſimilitude of manners. The higheſt and nobleſt enjoyment of familiar life, the communication of knowledge and reciprocation of ſentiments, muſt always preſuppoſe a diſpoſition to the ſame inquiry, and delight in the ſame diſcoveries.

With what ſatisfaction could the politician lay his ſchemes for the reformation of laws, or his compariſons of different forms of government, before the chemiſt, who has never accuſtomed his thoughts to any other object than ſalt and ſulphur; or how could the aſtronomer, in explaining his calculations and conjectures, endure the coldneſs of a grammarian, who would loſe ſight of *Jupiter* and all his *ſatellites*, for a happy etymology of an obſcure word, or a better explication of a controverted line.

Every man loves merit of the ſame kind with his own, when it is not likely to hinder his advancement or his reputation; for he not only beſt underſtands

the worth of thoſe qualities which he labours to cultivate, or the uſefulneſs of the art which he practiſes with ſucceſs, but always feels a reflected pleaſure from the praiſes, which, though given to another, belong equally to himſelf.

There is indeed no need of reſearch and refinement to diſcover that men muſt generally ſelect their companions from their own ſtate of life, ſince there are not many minds furniſhed for great variety of converſation, or adapted to multiplicity of intellectual entertainments.

The ſailor, the academick, the lawyer, the mechanick, and the courtier, have all a caſt of talk peculiar to their own fraternity, have fixed their attention upon the ſame events, have been engaged in affairs of the ſame ſort, and made uſe of alluſions and illuſtrations which themſelves only can underſtand.

To be infected with the jargon of a particular profeſſion, and to know only the language of a ſingle rank of mortals, is indeed ſufficiently deſpicable. But as limits muſt be always ſet to the excurſions of the human mind, there will be ſome ſtudy which every man more zealouſly proſecutes, ſome darling ſubject on which he is principally pleaſed to converſe; and he that can moſt inform or beſt underſtand him, will certainly be welcomed with particular regard.

Such partiality is not wholly to be avoided, nor is it culpable, unleſs ſuffered ſo far to predominate as to produce averſion from every other kind of excellence, and to ſhade the luſtre of diſſimilar virtues. Thoſe therefore, whom the lot of life has conjoined,

[library stamp]

ſhould endeavour conſtantly to approach towards the inclination of each other, invigorate every motion of concurrent deſire, and fan every ſpark of kindred curioſity.

It has been juſtly obſerved, that diſcord generally operates in little things; it is inflamed to its utmoſt vehemence by contrariety of taſte, oftener than of principles; and might therefore commonly be avoided by innocent conformity, which, if it was not at firſt the motive, ought always to be the conſequence of indiſſoluble union.

NUMB. 100. SATURDAY, *March* 2, 1751.

Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus *amico*
Tangit, et admiſſus circum præcordia ludit. PERSIUS.

Horace, with ſly inſinuating grace,
Laugh'd at his friend, and look'd him in the face;
Would raiſe a bluſh where ſecret vice he found,
And tickle while he gently prob'd the wound.
With ſeeming innocence the crowd beguil'd;
But made the deſperate paſſes, when he ſmil'd. DRYDEN.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AS very many well-diſpoſed perſons, by the unavoidable neceſſity of their affairs, are ſo unfortunate as to be totally buried in the country, where they labour under the moſt deplorable ignorance of what is tranſacting among the polite part of mankind,

kind, I cannot help thinking, that, as a publick writer, you ſhould take the caſe of theſe truly compaſſionable objects under your conſideration.

Theſe unhappy languiſhers in obſcurity ſhould be furniſhed with ſuch accounts of the employments of people of the world, as may engage them in their ſeveral remote corners to a laudable imitation; or, at leaſt, ſo far inform and prepare them, that if by any joyful change of ſituation they ſhould be ſuddenly tranſported into the gay ſcene, they may not gape, and wonder, and ſtare, and be utterly at a loſs how to behave and make a proper appearance in it.

It is inconceivable how much the welfare of all the country towns in the kingdom might be promoted, if you would uſe your charitable endeavours to raiſe in them a noble emulation of the manners and cuſtoms of higher life.

For this purpoſe you ſhould give a very clear and ample deſcription of the whole ſet of polite acquirements; a complete hiſtory of forms, faſhions, frolicks, of routs, drums, hurricanes, balls, aſſemblies, ridottos, maſquerades, auctions, plays, operas, puppet-ſhows, and bear-gardens; of all thoſe delights which profitably engage the attention of the moſt ſublime characters, and by which they have brought to ſuch amazing perfection the whole art and myſtery of paſſing day after day, week after week, and year after year, without the heavy aſſiſtance of any one thing that formal creatures are pleaſed to call uſeful and neceſſary.

In giving due inſtructions through what ſteps to attain this ſummit of human excellence, you may add

add ſuch irreſiſtible arguments in its favour, as muſt convince numbers, who in other inſtances do not ſeem to want natural underſtanding, of the unaccountable error of ſuppoſing they were ſent into the world for any other purpoſe but to flutter, ſport, and ſhine. For, after all, nothing can be clearer than that an everlaſting round of diverſion, and the more lively and hurrying the better, is the moſt important end of human life.

It is really prodigious, ſo much as the world is improved, that there ſhould in theſe days be perſons ſo ignorant and ſtupid as to think it neceſſary to miſpend their time, and trouble their heads about any thing elſe than purſuing the preſent fancy; for what elſe is worth living for?

It is time enough ſurely to think of conſequences when they come; and as for the antiquated notions of duty, they are not to be met with in any *French* novel, or any book one ever looks into, but derived almoſt wholly from the writings of authors, who lived a vaſt many ages ago, and who, as they were totally without any idea of thoſe accompliſhments which now characteriſe people of diſtinction, have been for ſome time ſinking apace into utter contempt. It does not appear that even their moſt zealous admirers, for ſome partiſans of his own ſort every writer will have, can pretend to ſay they were ever at one ridotto.

In the important article of diverſions, the ceremonial of viſits, the extatick delight of unfriendly intimacies and unmeaning civilities, they are abſolutely ſilent. Blunt truth, and downright honeſty, plain clothes, ſtaying at home, hard work, few

words, and thoſe unenlivened with cenſure or double meaning, are what they recommend as the ornaments and pleaſures of life. Little oaths, polite diſſimulation, tea-table ſcandal, delightful indolence, the glitter of finery, the triumph of precedence, the enchantments of flattery, they ſeem to have had no notion of, and I cannot but laugh to think what a figure they would have made in a drawing-room, and how frighted they would have looked at a gaming-table.

The noble zeal of patriotiſm that diſdains authority, and tramples on laws for ſport, was abſolutely the averſion of theſe tame wretches.

Indeed one cannot diſcover any one thing they pretend to teach people, but to be wiſe, and good; acquirements infinitely below the conſideration of perſons of taſte and ſpirit, who know how to ſpend their time to ſo much better purpoſe.

Among other admirable improvements, pray, Mr. *Rambler*, do not forget to enlarge on the very extenſive benefit of playing at cards on Sundays, a practice of ſuch infinite uſe, that we may modeſtly expect to ſee it prevail univerſally in all parts of this kingdom.

To perſons of faſhion, the advantage is obvious; becauſe, as for ſome ſtrange reaſon or other, which no fine gentleman or fine lady has yet been able to penetrate, there is neither play, nor maſquerade, nor bottled conjurer, nor any other thing worth living for, to be had on a Sunday; if it were not for the charitable aſſiſtance of whiſt or bragg, the genteel part of mankind muſt, one day in ſeven, neceſſarily ſuffer a total extinction of being.

Nor

Nor are the perſons of high rank the only gainers by ſo ſalutary a cuſtom, which extends its good influence, in ſome degree, to the lower orders of people; but were it quite general, how much better and happier would the world be than it is even now?

'Tis hard upon poor creatures, be they ever ſo mean, to deny them thoſe enjoyments and liberties which are equally open for all. Yet if ſervants were taught to go to church on this day, ſpend ſome part of it in reading or receiving inſtruction in a family way, and the reſt in mere friendly converſation, the poor wretches would infallibly take it into their heads, that they were obliged to be ſober, modeſt, diligent, and faithful to their maſters and miſtreſſes.

Now ſurely no one of common prudence or humanity would wiſh their domeſticks infected with ſuch ſtrange and primitive notions, or laid under ſuch unmerciful reſtraints: All which may, in a great meaſure, be prevented by the prevalence of the good-humoured faſhion that I would have you recommend. For when the lower kind of people ſee their betters, with a truly laudable ſpirit, inſulting and flying in the face of thoſe rude, ill-bred dictators, piety and the laws, they are thereby excited and admoniſhed, as far as actions can admoniſh and excite, and taught that they too have an equal right of ſetting them at defiance in ſuch inſtances as their particular neceſſities and inclinations may require; and thus is the liberty of the whole human ſpecies mightily improved and enlarged.

In ſhort, Mr. *Rambler*, by a faithful repreſentation of the numberleſs benefits of a modiſh life, you will have done your part in promoting what every body ſeems

ſeems to confeſs the true purpoſe of human exiſtence, perpetual diſſipation.

By encouraging people to employ their whole attention on trifles, and make amuſement their ſole ſtudy, you will teach them how to avoid many very uneaſy reflections.

All the ſoft feelings of humanity, the ſympathies of friendſhip, all natural temptations to the care of a family, and ſolicitude about the good or ill of others, with the whole train of domeſtick and ſocial affections, which create ſuch daily anxieties and embarraſſments, will be happily ſtifled and ſuppreſſed in a round of perpetual delights; and all ſerious thoughts, but particularly that of *hereafter*, be baniſhed out of the world; a moſt perplexing apprehenſion, but luckily a moſt groundleſs one too, as it is ſo very clear a caſe, that nobody ever dies.

I am, &c.

CHARIESSA.

NUMB. 101. TUESDAY, *March* 5, 1751.

Mella jubes Hyblæa tibi vel Hymettia naſci,
Et thyma Cecropiæ Corſica ponis api. MART.

Alas! dear Sir, you try in vain,
Impoſſibilities to gain;
No bee from *Corſica's* rank juice,
Hyblæan honey can produce. F. LEWIS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING by ſeveral years of continual ſtudy treaſured in my mind a great number of principles and ideas, and obtained by frequent exerciſe the power of applying them with propriety, and combining them with readineſs, I reſolved to quit the univerſity, where I conſidered myſelf as a gem hidden in the mine, and to mingle in the crowd of publick life. I was naturally attracted by the company of thoſe who were of the ſame age with myſelf, and finding that my academical gravity contributed very little to my reputation, applied my faculties to jocularity and burleſque. Thus, in a ſhort time, I had heated my imagination to ſuch a ſtate of activity and ebullition, that upon every occaſion it fumed away in burſts of wit, and evaporations of gaiety. I became on a ſudden the idol of the coffee-houſe, was in one winter ſolicited to accept the preſidentſhip of five clubs, was dragged by violence

to every new play, and quoted in every controverſy upon theatrical merit; was in every publick place ſurrounded by a multitude of humble auditors, who retailed in other places of reſort my maxims and my jeſts, and was boaſted as their intimate and companion by many, who had no other pretenſions to my acquaintance, than that they had drank chocolate in the ſame room.

You will not wonder, Mr. RAMBLER, that I mention my ſucceſs with ſome appearance of triumph and elevation. Perhaps no kind of ſuperiority is more flattering or alluring than that which is conferred by the powers of converſation, by extemporaneous ſprightlineſs of fancy, copiouſneſs of language, and fertility of ſentiment. In other exertions of genius, the greater part of the praiſe is unknown and unenjoyed; the writer, indeed, ſpreads his reputation to a wider extent, but receives little pleaſure or advantage from the diffuſion of his name, and only obtains a kind of nominal ſovereignty over regions which pay no tribute. The colloquial wit has always his own radiance reflected on himſelf, and enjoys all the pleaſure which he beſtows; he finds his power confeſſed by every one that approaches him, ſees friendſhip kindling with rapture, and attention ſwelling into praiſe.

The deſire which every man feels of importance and eſteem, is ſo much gratified by finding an aſſembly, at his entrance, brightened with gladneſs and huſhed with expectation, that the recollection of ſuch diſtinctions can ſcarcely fail to be pleaſing whenſoever it is innocent. And my conſcience does not reproach me with any mean or criminal effects of vanity;

nity; ſince I always employed my influence on the ſide of virtue, and never ſacrificed my underſtanding or my religion to the pleaſure of applauſe.

There were many whom either the deſire of enjoying my pleaſantry, or the pride of being thought to enjoy it, brought often into my company; but I was careſſed in a particular manner by *Demochares*, a gentleman of a large eſtate, and a liberal diſpoſition. My fortune being by no means exuberant, inclined me to be pleaſed with a friend who was willing to be entertained at his own charge. I became by daily invitations habituated to his table, and, as he believed my acquaintance neceſſary to the character of elegance, which he was deſirous of eſtabliſhing, I lived in all the luxury of affluence, without expence or dependence, and paſſed my life in a perpetual reciprocation of pleaſure, with men brought together by ſimilitude of accompliſhments, or deſire of improvement.

But all power has its ſphere of activity, beyond which it produces no effect. *Demochares* being called by his affairs into the country, imagined that he ſhould increaſe his popularity by coming among his neighbours accompanied by a man whoſe abilities were ſo generally allowed. The report preſently ſpread through half the country that *Demochares* was arrived, and had brought with him the celebrated *Hilarius*, by whom ſuch merriment would be excited, as had never been enjoyed or conceived before. I knew, indeed, the purpoſe for which I was invited, and, as men do not look diligently out for poſſible miſcarriages, was pleaſed to find myſelf courted upon principles of intereſt, and conſidered

as capable of reconciling factions, composing feuds, and uniting a whole province in social happiness.

After a few days spent in adjusting his domestick regulations, *Demochares* invited all the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to dinner, and did not forget to hint how much my presence was expected to heighten the pleasure of the feast. He informed me what prejudices my reputation had raised in my favour, and represented the satisfaction with which he should see me kindle up the blaze of merriment, and should remark the various effects that my fire would have upon such diversity of matter.

This declaration, by which he intended to quicken my vivacity, filled me with solicitude. I felt an ambition of shining, which I never knew before; and was therefore embarrassed with an unusual fear of disgrace. I passed the night in planning out to myself the conversation of the coming day; recollected all my topicks of raillery, proposed proper subjects of ridicule, prepared smart replies to a thousand questions, accommodated answers to imaginary repartees, and formed a magazine of remarks, apophthegms, tales, and illustrations.

The morning broke at last in the midst of these busy meditations. I rose with the palpitations of a champion on the day of combat; and notwithstanding all my efforts, found my spirits sunk under the weight of expectation. The company soon after began to drop in, and every one, at his entrance, was introduced to *Hilarius*. What conception the inhabitants of this region had formed of a wit, I cannot yet discover; but observed that they all seemed, after the regular exchange of compli-

ments,

ments, to turn away difappointed; and that while we waited for dinner, they caft their eyes firft upon me, and then upon each other, like a theatrical affembly waiting for a fhew.

From the uneafinefs of this fituation, I was relieved by the dinner; and as every attention was taken up by the bufinefs of the hour, I funk quietly to a level with the reft of the company. But no fooner were the difhes removed, than, inftead of cheerful confidence and familiar prattle, an univerfal filence again fhewed their expectation of fome unufual performance. My friend endeavoured to roufe them by healths and queftions, but they anfwered him with great brevity, and immediately relapfed into their former taciturnity.

I had waited in hope of fome opportunity to divert them, but could find no pafs opened for a fingle fally; and who can be merry without an object of mirth? After a few faint efforts, which produced neither applaufe nor oppofition, I was content to mingle with the mafs, to put round the glafs in filence, and folace myfelf with my own contemplations.

My friend looked round him; the guefts ftared at one another; and if now and then a few fyllables were uttered with timidity and hefitation, there was none ready to make any reply. All our faculties were frozen, and every minute took away from our capacity of pleafing, and difpofition to be pleafed. Thus paffed the hours to which fo much happinefs was decreed; the hours which had, by a kind of open proclamation, been devoted to wit, to mirth, and to *Hilarius*.

At laſt the night came on, and the neceſſity of parting freed us from the perſecutions of each other. I heard them, as they walked along the court, murmuring at the loſs of the day, and enquiring whether any man would pay a ſecond viſit to a houſe haunted by a wit.

Demochares, whoſe benevolence is greater than his penetration, having flattered his hopes with the ſecondary honour which he was to gain by my ſprightlineſs and elegance, and the affection with which he ſhould be followed for a perpetual banquet of gaiety, was not able to conceal his vexation and reſentment, nor would eaſily be convinced, that I had not ſacrificed his intereſt to ſullenneſs and caprice, and ſtudiouſly endeavoured to diſguſt his gueſts, and ſuppreſſed my powers of delighting, in obſtinate and premeditated ſilence. I am informed that the reproach of their ill reception is divided by the gentlemen of the country between us; ſome being of opinion, that my friend is deluded by an impoſtor, who, though he has found ſome art of gaining his favour, is afraid to ſpeak before men of more penetration; and others concluding, that I think only *London* the proper theatre of my abilities, and diſdain to exert my genius for the praiſe of ruſticks.

I believe, Mr. RAMBLER, that it has ſometimes happened to others, who have the good or ill fortune to be celebrated for wits, to fall under the ſame cenſures upon the like occaſions. I hope therefore that you will prevent any miſrepreſentations of ſuch failures, by remarking that invention is not wholly at the command of its poſſeſſor; that the power of pleaſing is very often obſtructed by the deſire; that all ex-

pectation

pectation lessens surprize, yet some surprize is necessary to gaiety; and that those who desire to partake of the pleasure of wit must contribute to its production, since the mind stagnates without external ventilation, and that effervescence of the fancy, which flashes into transport, can be raised only by the infusion of dissimilar ideas.

NUMB. 102. SATURDAY, *March* 9, 1751.

Ipsa quoque assiduo labuntur tempora motu
Non secus ac flumen: neque enim consistere flumen,
Nec levis hora potest; sed ut unda impellitur undâ,
Urgeturque prior veniente, urgetque priorem,
Tempora sic fugiunt pariter, pariterque sequuntur. OVID.

With constant motion as the moments glide,
Behold in running life the rolling tide!
For none can stem by art, or stop by pow'r,
The flowing ocean, or the fleeting hour:
But wave by wave pursu'd arrives on shore,
And each impell'd behind impels before:
So time on time revolving we descry;
So minutes follow, and so minutes fly. ELPHINSTON.

"LIFE," says *Seneca*, "is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing "our scenes: we first leave childhood behind us, "then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, "then the better and more pleasing part of old age." The perusal of this passage having incited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his

difpofition to all external objects, and the thoughtleffnefs with which he floats along the ftream of time, I funk into a flumber amidft my meditations, and, on a fudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the fhouts of alacrity, the fhrieks of alarm, the whiftle of winds, and the dafh of waters.

My aftonifhment for a time repreffed my curiofity; but foon recovering myfelf fo far as to enquire whither we were going, and what was the caufe of fuch clamour and confufion, I was told that they were launching out into the *ocean of life*; that we had already paffed the ftreights of infancy, in which multitudes had perifhed, fome by the weaknefs and fragility of their veffels, and more by the folly, perverfenefs, or negligence, of thofe who undertook to fteer them; and that we were now on the main fea, abandoned to the winds and billows, without any other means of fecurity than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to choofe among great numbers that offered their direction and affiftance.

I then looked round with anxious eagernefs; and firft turning my eyes behind me, faw a ftream flowing through flowery iflands, which every one that failed along feemed to behold with pleafure; but no fooner touched, than the current, which, though not noify or turbulent, was yet irrefiftible, bore him away. Beyond thefe iflands all was darknefs, nor could any of the paffengers defcribe the fhore at which he firft embarked.

Before me, and each other fide, was an expanfe of waters violently agitated, and covered with fo thick a mift, that the moft perfpicacious eye could fee but

a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many ſunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full ſails, and inſulting thoſe whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and ſo thick the darkneſs, that no caution could confer ſecurity. Yet there were many, who, by falſe intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence puſhed thoſe whom they found in their way againſt the rocks.

The current was invariable and inſurmountable; but though it was impoſſible to ſail againſt it, or to return to the place that was once paſſed, yet it was not ſo violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, ſince, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to ſteer with much care or prudence; for by ſome univerſal infatuation, every man appeared to think himſelf ſafe, though he ſaw his conſorts every moment ſinking round him; and no ſooner had the waves cloſed over them, than their fate and their miſconduct were forgotten; the voyage was purſued with the ſame jocund confidence; every man congratulated himſelf upon the ſoundneſs of his veſſel, and believed himſelf able to ſtem the whirlpool in which his friend was ſwallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was daſhed: nor was it often obſerved that the ſight of a wreck made any man change his courſe: if he turned aſide for a moment, he ſoon forgot the rudder, and left himſelf again to the diſpoſal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference, or from wearineſs of their preſent condition; for not one of thoſe who thus ruſhed upon deſtruction, failed, when he was ſinking, to call loudly upon his aſſociates for that help which could not now be given him; and many ſpent their laſt moments in cautioning others againſt the folly by which they were intercepted in the midſt of their courſe. Their benevolence was ſometimes praiſed, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The veſſels in which we had embarked being confeſſedly unequal to the turbulence of the ſtream of life, were viſibly impaired in the courſe of the voyage; ſo that every paſſenger was certain, that how long ſoever he might, by favourable accidents, or by inceſſant vigilance, be preſerved, he muſt ſink at laſt.

This neceſſity of periſhing might have been expected to ſadden the gay, and intimidate the daring, at leaſt to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the ſolace of their labours; yet in effect none ſeemed leſs to expect deſtruction than thoſe to whom it was moſt dreadful; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themſelves; and thoſe who knew their inability to bear the ſight of the terrors that embarraſſed their way, took care never to look forward, but found ſome amuſement for the preſent moment, and generally entertained themſelves by playing with Hope, who was the conſtant aſſociate of the voyage of life.

Yet

Yet all that Hope ventured to promiſe, even to thoſe whom ſhe favoured moſt, was, not that they ſhould eſcape, but that they ſhould ſink laſt; and with this promiſe every one was ſatisfied, though he laughed at the reſt for ſeeming to believe it. Hope, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions; for in proportion as their veſſels grew leaky, ſhe redoubled her aſſurances of ſafety; and none were more buſy in making proviſions for a long voyage, than they whom all but themſelves ſaw likely to periſh ſoon by irreparable decay.

In the midſt of the current of life was the *gulph of* Intemperance, a dreadful whirlpool, interſperſed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease ſpread couches of repoſe, and with ſhades, where Pleasure warbled the ſong of invitation. Within ſight of theſe rocks all who ſailed on the ocean of life muſt neceſſarily paſs. Reason, indeed, was always at hand to ſteer the paſſengers through a narrow outlet by which they might eſcape; but very few could, by her intreaties or remonſtrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without ſtipulating that ſhe ſhould approach ſo near unto the rocks of Pleasure, that they might ſolace themſelves with a ſhort enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to purſue their courſe without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon ſo far by theſe promiſes, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet inter-

rupted the courſe of the veſſel, and drew it, by inſenſible rotations, towards the center. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulph was generally too ſtrong to be overcome; and the paſſenger, having danced in circles with a pleaſing and giddy velocity, was at laſt overwhelmed and loſt. Thoſe few whom REASON was able to extricate, generally ſuffered ſo many ſhocks upon the points which ſhot out from the rocks of PLEASURE, that they were unable to continue their courſe with the ſame ſtrength and facility as before, but floated along timorouſly and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and ſhattered by every ruffle of the water, till they ſunk, by ſlow degrees, after long ſtruggles, and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others againſt the firſt approach of the gulph of INTEMPERANCE.

There were artiſts who profeſſed to repair the breaches and ſtop the leaks of the veſſels which had been ſhattered on the rocks of PLEASURE. Many appeared to have great confidence in their ſkill, and ſome, indeed, were preſerved by it from ſinking, who had received only a ſingle blow; but I remarked that few veſſels laſted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artiſts themſelves continued afloat longer than thoſe who had leaſt of their aſſiſtance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of life, the cautious had above the negligent, was, that they ſunk later, and more ſuddenly; for they paſſed forward till they had ſometimes ſeen all thoſe in whoſe company they had iſſued from the ſtreights of

of infancy, perifh in the way, and at laft were overfet by a crofs breeze, without the toil of refiftance, or the anguifh of expectation. But fuch as had often fallen againft the rocks of Pleasure, commonly fubfided by fenfible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and haraffed themfelves by labours that fcarce Hope herfelf could flatter with fuccefs.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was fuddenly alarmed with an admonition from fome unknown Power, "Gaze "not idly upon others when thou thyfelf art fink"ing. Whence is this thoughtlefs tranquillity, "when thou and they are equally endangered?" I looked, and feeing the gulph of Intemperance before me, ftarted and awaked.

NUMB. 103. TUESDAY, *March* 12, 1751.

Scire volunt ſecreta domus, atque inde timeri. JUV.

They ſearch the ſecrets of the houſe, and ſo
Are worſhipp'd there, and fear'd for what they know.
DRYDEN.

CURIOSITY is one of the permanent and certain characteriſticks of a vigorous intellect. Every advance into knowledge opens new proſpects, and produces new incitements to further progreſs. All the attainments poſſible in our preſent ſtate are evidently inadequate to our capacities of enjoyment; conqueſt ſerves no purpoſe but that of kindling ambition, diſcovery has no effect but of raiſing expectation; the gratification of one deſire encourages another; and after all our labours, ſtudies, and enquiries, we are continually at the ſame diſtance from the completion of our ſchemes, have ſtill ſome wiſh importunate to be ſatisfied, and ſome faculty reſtleſs and turbulent for want of its enjoyment.

The deſire of knowledge, though often animated by extrinſick and adventitious motives, ſeems on many occaſions to operate without ſubordination to any other principle; we are eager to ſee and hear, without intention of referring our obſervations to a farther end; we climb a mountain for a proſpect of the plain; we run to the ſtrand in a ſtorm, that we may contemplate the agitation of the water; we range from city to city, though we profeſs neither architecture

architecture nor fortification; we cross seas only to view nature in nakedness, or magnificence in ruins; we are equally allured by novelty of every kind, by a desert or a palace, a cataract or a cavern, by every thing rude and every thing polished, every thing great and every thing little; we do not see a thicket but with some temptation to enter it, nor remark an insect flying before us but with an inclination to pursue it.

This passion is, perhaps, regularly heightened in proportion as the powers of the mind are elevated and enlarged. *Lucan* therefore introduces *Cæsar* speaking with dignity suitable to the grandeur of his designs and the extent of his capacity, when he declares to the high-priest of *Egypt*, that he has no desire equally powerful with that of finding the origin of the *Nile*, and that he would quit all the projects of the civil war for a sight of those fountains which had been so long concealed. And *Homer*, when he would furnish the *Sirens* with a temptation, to which his hero, renowned for wisdom, might yield without disgrace, makes them declare, that none ever departed from them but with increase of knowledge.

There is, indeed, scarce any kind of ideal acquirement which may not be applied to some use, or which may not at least gratify pride with occasional superiority; but whoever attends the motions of his own mind will find, that upon the first appearance of an object, or the first start of a question, his inclination to a nearer view, or more accurate discussion, precedes all thoughts of profit, or of

compe-

competition; and that his desires take wing by instantaneous impulse, though their flight may be invigorated, or their efforts renewed, by subsequent considerations. The gratification of curiosity rather frees us from uneasiness than confers pleasure; we are more pained by ignorance than delighted by instruction. Curiosity is the thirst of the soul; it inflames and torments us, and makes us taste every thing with joy, however otherwise insipid, by which it may be quenched.

It is evident that the earliest searchers after knowledge must have proposed knowledge only as their reward; and that science, though perhaps the nursling of interest, was the daughter of curiosity: for who can believe that they who first watched the course of the stars, foresaw the use of their discoveries to the facilitation of commerce, or the mensuration of time? They were delighted with the splendor of the nocturnal skies, they found that the lights changed their places; what they admired they were anxious to understand, and in time traced their revolutions.

There are, indeed, beings in the form of men, who appear satisfied with their intellectual possessions, and seem to live without desire of enlarging their conceptions; before whom the world passes without notice, and who are equally unmoved by nature or by art.

This negligence is sometimes only the temporary effect of a predominant passion; a lover finds no inclination to travel any path, but that which leads to the habitation of his mistress; a trader can spare

little

little attention to common occurrences, when his fortune is endangered by a ſtorm. It is frequently the conſequence of a total immerſion in ſenſuality: corporeal pleaſures may be indulged till the memory of every other kind of happineſs is obliterated; the mind, long habituated to a lethargick and quieſcent ſtate, is unwilling to wake to the toil of thinking; and though ſhe may ſometimes be diſturbed by the obtruſion of new ideas, ſhrinks back again to ignorance and reſt.

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the continual taſk of procuring the ſupports of life, denies all opportunities of deviation from their own narrow track, the number of ſuch as live without the ardour of enquiry is very ſmall, though many content themſelves with cheap amuſements, and waſte their lives in reſearches of no importance.

There is no ſnare more dangerous to buſy and excurſive minds, than the cobwebs of petty inquiſitiveneſs, which entangle them in trivial employments and minute ſtudies, and detain them in a middle ſtate, between the tedioufneſs of total inactivity, and the fatigue of laborious efforts, enchant them at once with eaſe and novelty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learning. The neceſſity of doing ſomething, and the fear of undertaking much, ſinks the hiſtorian to a genealogiſt, the philoſopher to a journaliſt of the weather, and the mathematician to a conſtructer of dials.

It is happy when thoſe who cannot content themſelves to be idle, nor reſolve to be induſtrious, are at leaſt employed without injury to others; but it ſeldom happens that we can contain ourſelves long

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in a neutral ſtate, or forbear to ſink into vice, when we are no longer ſoaring towards virtue.

Nugaculus was diſtinguiſhed in his earlier years by an uncommon livelineſs of imagination, quickneſs of ſagacity, and extent of knowledge. When he entered into life, he applied himſelf with particular inquiſitiveneſs to examine the various motives of human actions, the complicated influence of mingled affections, the different modifications of intereſt and ambition, and the various cauſes of miſcarriage and ſucceſs both in publick and private affairs.

Though his friends did not diſcover to what purpoſe all theſe obſervations were collected, or how *Nugaculus* would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an inceſſant attention to changes of countenance, burſts of inconſideration, ſallies of paſſion, and all the other caſualties by which he uſed to trace a character, yet they could not deny the ſtudy of human nature to be worthy of a wiſe man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his diſcoveries, and liſtened with ſubmiſſive modeſty to his lectures on the uncertainty of inclination, the weakneſs of reſolves, and the inſtability of temper, to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of a ruling paſſion.

Such was the firſt incitement of *Nugaculus* to a cloſe inſpection into the conduct of mankind. He had no intereſt in view, and therefore no deſign of ſupplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any intention to expoſe them; but having once found the art of engaging his

his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himſelf, but has paſſed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every riſing character, and lived upon a ſmall eſtate without any thought of encreaſing it.

He is, by continual application, become a general maſter of ſecret hiſtory, and can give an account of the intrigues, private marriages, competitions, and ſtratagems, of half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every man's eſtate, the terms upon which every ſpendthrift raiſes his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure ſtipulated by every contract, and the expectations of every family from maiden aunts and childleſs acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every houſe, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler, and the land of another underlet by his ſteward; he can tell where the manor-houſe is falling, though large ſums are yearly paid for repairs; and where the tenants are felling woods without the conſent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence he is inadvertently guilty of a thouſand acts of treachery. He ſees no man's ſervant without draining him of his truſt; he enters no family without flattering the children into diſcoveries; he is a perpetual ſpy upon the doors of his neighbours; and knows by long experience, at whatever diſtance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, and a pimp.

Nugaculus is not ill-natured, and therefore his induſtry has not hitherto been very miſchievous to others, or dangerous to himſelf; but ſince he can-

not enjoy this knowledge but by diſcovering it, and, if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffick like the chymiſts, and purchaſe one ſecret with another; he is every day more hated as he is more known; for he is conſidered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happineſs in his power, and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

Thus has an intention, innocent at firſt, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, by an accidental declenſion of minuteneſs, betrayed *Nugaculus*, not only to a fooliſh, but vicious waſte of a life which might have been honourably paſſed in publick ſervices, or domeſtick virtues. He has loſt his original intention, and given up his mind to employments that engroſs, but do not improve it.

NUMB. 104. SATURDAY, *March* 16, 1751.

——Nihil eſt quod credere de ſe
Non poſſit—— JUVENAL.

None e'er rejects hyperbolies of praiſe.

THE apparent inſufficiency of every individual to his own happineſs or ſafety, compels us to ſeek from one another aſſiſtance and ſupport. The neceſſity of joint efforts for the execution of any great or extenſive deſign, the variety of powers diſſeminated in the ſpecies, and the proportion between the defects and excellencies of different perſons, demand an interchange of help, and communication of intelligence, and by frequent reciprocations of beneficence unite mankind in ſociety and friendſhip.

If it can be imagined that there ever was a time when the inhabitants of any country were in a ſtate of equality, without diſtinction of rank, or peculiarity of poſſeſſions, it is reaſonable to believe that every man was then loved in proportion as he could contribute by his ſtrength, or his ſkill, to the ſupply of natural wants; there was then little room for peeviſh diſlike, or capricious favour; the affection admitted into the heart was rather eſteem than tenderneſs; and kindneſs was only purchaſed by benefits. But when by force or policy, by wiſdom or by fortune, property and ſuperiority were introduced and eſtabliſhed, ſo that many were condemned

to labour for the ſupport of a few, then they whoſe poſſeſſions ſwelled above their wants, naturally laid out their ſuperfluities upon pleaſure; and thoſe who could not gain friendſhip by neceſſary offices, endeavoured to promote their intereſt by luxurious gratifications, and to create need which they might be courted to ſupply.

The deſires of mankind are much more numerous than their attainments, and the capacity of imagination much larger than actual enjoyment. Multitudes are therefore unſatisfied with their allotment; and he that hopes to improve his condition by the favour of another, and either finds no room for the exertion of great qualities, or perceives himſelf excelled by his rivals, will, by other expedients, endeavour to become agreeable where he cannot be important, and learn, by degrees, to number the *art of pleaſing* among the moſt uſeful ſtudies, and moſt valuable acquiſitions.

This art, like others, is cultivated in proportion to its uſefulneſs, and will always flouriſh moſt where it is moſt rewarded; for this reaſon we find it practiſed with great aſſiduity under abſolute governments, where honours and riches are in the hands of one man, whom all endeavour to propitiate, and who ſoon becomes ſo much accuſtomed to compliance and officiouſneſs, as not eaſily to find, in the moſt delicate addreſs; that novelty which is neceſſary to procure attention.

It is diſcovered by a very few experiments, that no man is much pleaſed with a companion, who does not increaſe, in ſome reſpect, his fondneſs of himſelf; and, therefore, he that wiſhes rather to be

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led forward to proſperity by the gentle hand of favour, than to force his way by labour and merit, muſt conſider with more care how to diſplay his patron's excellencies than his own; that whenever he approaches, he may fill the imagination with pleaſing dreams, and chace away diſguſt and wearineſs by a perpetual ſucceſſion of delightful images.

This may, indeed, ſometimes be effected by turning the attention upon advantages which are really poſſeſſed, or upon proſpects which reaſon ſpreads before hope; for whoever can deſerve or require to be courted, has generally, either from nature or from fortune, gifts, which he may review with ſatisfaction, and of which, when he is artfully recalled to the contemplation, he will ſeldom be diſpleaſed.

But thoſe who have once degraded their underſtanding to an application only to the paſſions, and who have learned to derive hope from any other ſources than induſtry and virtue, ſeldom retain dignity and magnanimity ſufficient to defend them againſt the conſtant recurrence of temptation to falſehood. He that is too deſirous to be loved, will ſoon learn to flatter, and when he has exhauſted all the variations of honeſt praiſe, and can delight no longer with the civility of truth, he will invent new topicks of panegyrick, and break out into raptures at virtues and beauties conferred by himſelf.

The drudgeries of dependance would, indeed, be aggravated by hopeleſneſs of ſucceſs, if no indulgence was allowed to adulation. He that will ob-

ſtinately confine his patron to hear only the commendations which he deſerves, will ſoon be forced to give way to others that regale him with more compaſs of muſick. The greateſt human virtue bears no proportion to human vanity. We always think ourſelves better than we are, and are generally deſirous that others ſhould think us ſtill better than we think ourſelves. To praiſe us for actions or diſpoſitions, which deſerve praiſe, is not to confer a benefit, but to pay a tribute. We have always pretenſions to fame, which, in our own hearts, we know to be diſputable, and which we are deſirous to ſtrengthen by a new ſuffrage; we have always hopes which we ſuſpect to be fallacious, and of which we eagerly ſnatch at every confirmation.

It may, indeed, be proper to make the firſt approaches under the conduct of truth, and to ſecure credit to future encomiums, by ſuch praiſe as may be ratified by the conſcience; but the mind once habituated to the luſciouſneſs of eulogy, becomes, in a ſhort time, nice and faſtidious, and, like a vitiated palate, is inceſſantly calling for higher gratifications.

It is ſcarcely credible to what degree diſcernment may be dazzled by the miſt of pride, and wiſdom infatuated by the intoxication of flattery; or how low the genius may deſcend by ſucceſſive gradations of ſervility, and how ſwiftly it may fall down the precipice of falſehood. No man can, indeed, obſerve, without indignation, on what names, both of ancient and modern times, the utmoſt exuberance of praiſe has been laviſhed, and

by what hands it has been beftowed. It has never yet been found, that the tyrant, the plunderer, the oppreffor, the moft hateful of the hateful, the moft profligate of the profligate, have been denied any celebrations which they were willing to purchafe, or that wickednefs and folly have not found correfpondent flatterers through all their fubordinations, except when they have been affociated with avarice or poverty, and have wanted either inclination or ability to hire a panegyrift.

As there is no character fo deformed as to fright away from it the proftitutes of praife, there is no degree of encomiaftick veneration which pride has refufed. The emperors of *Rome* fuffered themfelves to be worfhipped in their lives with altars and facrifices; and in an age more enlightened, the terms peculiar to the praife and worfhip of the Supreme Being, have been applied to wretches whom it was the reproach of humanity to number among men; and whom nothing but riches or power hindered thofe that read or wrote their deification, from hunting into the toils of juftice, as difturbers of the peace of nature.

There are, indeed, many among the poetical flatterers, who muft be refigned to infamy without vindication, and whom we muft confefs to have deferted the caufe of virtue for pay: they have committed, againft full conviction, the crime of obliterating the diftinctions between good and evil, and inftead of oppofing the encroachments of vice, have incited her progrefs, and celebrated her conquefts. But there is a lower clafs of fycophants, whofe underftanding has not made them capable of

equal guilt. Every man of high rank is ſurrounded with numbers, who have no other rule of thought or action, than his maxims, and his conduct; whom the honour of being numbered among his acquaintance, reconciles to all his vices, and all his abſurdities; and who eaſily perſuade themſelves to eſteem him, by whoſe regard they conſider themſelves as diſtinguiſhed and exalted.

It is dangerous for mean minds to venture themſelves within the ſphere of greatneſs. Stupidity is ſoon blinded by the ſplendor of wealth, and cowardice is eaſily fettered in the ſhackles of dependance. To ſolicit patronage, is, at leaſt, in the event, to ſet virtue to ſale. None can be pleaſed without praiſe, and few can be praiſed without falſehood; few can be aſſiduous without ſervility, and none can be ſervile without corruption.

[library stamp]

NUMB. 105. TUESDAY, *March* 19, 1751.

——— Animorum
Impulsu, et cæcâ magnâque cupidine ducti. JUV.

Vain man runs headlong, to caprice resign'd;
Impell'd by passion, and with folly blind.

I WAS lately considering, among other objects of speculation, the new attempt of an *universal register*, an office, in which every man may lodge an account of his superfluities and wants, of whatever he desires to purchase or to sell. My imagination soon presented to me the latitude to which this design may be extended by integrity and industry, and the advantages which may be justly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once its reputation shall be so established, that neither reproach nor fraud shall be feared from it; when an application to it shall not be censured as the last resource of desperation, nor its informations suspected as the fortuitous suggestions of men obliged not to appear ignorant. A place where every exuberance may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied, where every lawful passion may find its gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction, where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual, may be brought together, and where all conditions of humanity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation, must equally deserve the attention of the merchant and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who only lives to amuse himself with the various employ-

employments and purſuits of others. Nor will it be an uninſtructing ſchool to the greateſt maſters of method and diſpatch, if ſuch multiplicity can be preſerved from embarraſſment, and ſuch tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this ſplendid project, and filling my thoughts with its regulation, its conveniencies, its variety, and its conſequences, I ſunk gradually into ſlumber; but the ſame images, though leſs diſtinct, ſtill continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myſelf at the gate of an immenſe edifice, where innumerable multitudes were paſſing without confuſion; every face on which I fixed my eyes, ſeemed ſettled in the contemplation of ſome important purpoſe, and every foot was haſtened by eagerneſs and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I ſhould be drawn, and remained a while in the unpleaſing ſtate of an idler, where all other beings were buſy, giving place every moment to thoſe who had more importance in their looks. Aſhamed to ſtand ignorant, and afraid to aſk queſtions, at laſt I ſaw a lady ſweeping by me, whom, by the quickneſs of her eyes, the agility of her ſteps, and a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long-lov'd protectreſs, CURIOSITY. "Great "goddeſs," ſaid I, "may thy votary be permitted "to implore thy favour; if thou haſt been my di"rectreſs from the firſt dawn of reaſon, if I have "followed thee through the maze of life with in"variable fidelity, if I have turned to every new call, "and quitted at thy nod one purſuit for another, "if I have never ſtopped at the invitations of for"tune, nor forgot thy authority in the bowers of "pleaſure,

"pleaſure, inform me now whither chance has con-"ducted me."

"Thou art now," replied the ſmiling power, "in the preſence of JUSTICE, and of TRUTH, whom "the father of gods and men has ſent down to regiſ-"ter the demands and pretenſions of mankind, that "the world may at laſt be reduced to order, and that "none may complain hereafter of being doomed to "taſks for which they are unqualified, of poſſeſſing "faculties for which they cannot find employment, "or virtues that languiſh unobſerved for want of op-"portunities to exert them, of being encumbered "with ſuperfluities which they would willingly re-"ſign, or of waſting away in deſires which ought "to be ſatisfied. JUSTICE is now to examine every "man's wiſhes, and TRUTH is to record them; let "us approach, and obſerve the progreſs of this great "tranſaction."

She then moved forward, and TRUTH, who knew her among the moſt faithful of her followers, beckoned her to advance, till we were placed near the ſeat of JUSTICE. The firſt who required the aſſiſtance of the office, came forward with a ſlow pace, and tumour of dignity, and ſhaking a weighty purſe in his hand, demanded to be regiſtered by TRUTH, as the MÆCENAS of the preſent age, the chief encourager of literary merit, to whom men of learning and wit might apply in any exigence or diſtreſs with certainty of ſuccour. JUSTICE very mildly enquired, whether he had calculated the expence of ſuch a declaration? whether he had been informed what number of petitioners would ſwarm about him? whether he could diſtinguiſh idleneſs and negligence from calamity, often-

oſtentation from knowledge, or vivacity from wit? To theſe queſtions he ſeemed not well provided with a reply, but repeated his deſire to be recorded as a patron. JUSTICE then offered to regiſter his propoſal on theſe conditions, that he ſhould never ſuffer himſelf to be flattered; that he ſhould never delay an audience when he had nothing to do; and that he ſhould never encourage followers without intending to reward them. Theſe terms were too hard to be accepted; for what, ſaid he, is the end of patronage, but the pleaſure of reading dedications, holding multitudes in ſuſpenſe, and enjoying their hopes, their fears, and their anxiety, flattering them to aſſiduity, and, at laſt, diſmiſſing them for impatience? JUSTICE heard his confeſſion, and ordered his name to be poſted upon the gate among cheats, and robbers, and publick nuiſances, which all were by that notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the diſcoverer of a new art of education, by which languages and ſciences might be taught to all capacities, and all inclinations, without fear of puniſhment, pain of confinement, loſs of any part of the gay mien of ignorance, or any obſtruction of the neceſſary progreſs in dreſs, dancing, or cards.

JUSTICE and TRUTH did not trouble this great adept with many enquiries; but finding his addreſs awkward, and his ſpeech barbarous, ordered him to be regiſtered as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might ſerve in any poſt where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required.

A man of a very great and philoſophick aſpect, required notice to be given of his intention to ſet out,

a certain

a certain day, on a ſubmarine voyage, and of his willingneſs to take in paſſengers for no more than double the price at which they might ſail above water. His deſire was granted, and he retired to a convenient ſtand, in expectation of filling his ſhip, and growing rich in a ſhort time by the ſecrecy, ſafety, and expedition of the paſſage.

Another deſired to advertiſe the curious, that he had, for the advancement of true knowledge, contrived an optical inſtrument, by which thoſe who laid out their induſtry on memorials of the changes of the wind, might obſerve the direction of the weather-cocks on the hitherſide of the lunar world.

Another wiſhed to be known as the author of an invention, by which cities or kingdoms might be made warm in winter by a ſingle fire, a kettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle by which a man might bid defiance to floods, and continue floating in an inundation, without any inconvenience, till the water ſhould ſubſide. JUSTICE conſidered theſe projects as of no importance but to their authors, and therefore ſcarcely condeſcended to examine them; but TRUTH refuſed to admit them into the regiſter.

Twenty different pretenders came in one hour to give notice of an univerſal medicine, by which all diſeaſes might be cured or prevented, and life protracted beyond the age of NESTOR. But JUSTICE informed them, that one univerſal medicine was ſufficient, and ſhe would delay the notification till ſhe ſaw who could longeſt preſerve his own life.

A thouſand other claims and offers were exhibited and examined. I remarked, among this mighty multitude, that, of intellectual advantages, many

had great exuberance, and few confeſſed any want; of every art there were a hundred profeſſors for a ſingle pupil; but of other attainments, ſuch as riches, honours, and preferments, I found none that had too much, but thouſands and ten thouſands that thought themſelves intitled to a larger dividend.

It often happened, that old miſers, and women, married at the cloſe of life, advertiſed their want of children; nor was it uncommon for thoſe who had a numerous offspring, to give notice of a ſon or daughter to be ſpared; but though appearances promiſed well on both ſides, the bargain ſeldom ſucceeded; for they ſoon loſt their inclination to adopted children, and proclaimed their intentions to promote ſome ſcheme of publick charity: a thouſand propoſals were immediately made, among which they heſitated till death precluded the deciſion.

As I ſtood looking on this ſcene of confuſion, TRUTH condeſcended to aſk me, what was my buſineſs at her office? I was ſtruck with the unexpected queſtion, and awaked by my efforts to anſwer it.

NUMB. 106. SATURDAY, *March* 23, 1751.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. CIC.

Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.

IT is neceſſary to the ſucceſs of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumſtances or characters, and enter the heart on that ſide where the paſſions ſtand ready to receive it. A lady ſeldom liſtens with attention to any praiſe but that of her beauty; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffick: and the author will ſcarcely be pleaſed without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conſpiracies againſt genius, and the ſlow progreſs of merit, or ſome praiſes of the magnanimity of thoſe who encounter poverty and contempt in the cauſe of knowledge, and truſt for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of poſterity.

An aſſurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation, is the ſettled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers. To raiſe *monuments more durable than braſs, and more conſpicuous than pyramids*, has been long the common boaſt of literature; but among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themſelves, far the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to diſpoſe them, ſee their edifices periſh as they are towering to completion, and

and thoſe few that for a while attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and ſoon ſink by the ſaps of time.

No place affords a more ſtriking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a publick library; for who can ſee the wall crowded on every ſide by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate enquiry, now ſcarcely known but by the catalogue, and preſerved only to increaſe the pomp of learning, without conſidering how many hours have been waſted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praiſes of futurity, how many ſtatues have riſen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagoniſts, and dogmatiſm has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power.

——— Non unquam dedit
Documenta fors majora, quàm fragili loco
Starent ſuperbi.

Inſulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice,
On ſwelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authors whoſe performances are thus treaſured up in magnificent obſcurity, moſt are forgotten, becauſe they never deſerved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the ſtratagem of intrigue, or the ſervility of adulation.

Nothing

Nothing is more common than to find men whofe works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praifes by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legiflators of fcience. Curiofity is naturally excited, their volumes after long enquiry are found, but feldom reward the labour of the fearch. Every period of time has produced thefe bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up a while by the breath of fafhion, and then break at once, and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the lofs of ancient writers whofe characters have furvived their works; but perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we fhould find them only the *Granvilles*, *Montagues*, *Stepneys*, and *Sheffields* of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raifed to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied, that many have funk into oblivion, whom it were unjuft to number with this defpicable clafs. Various kinds of literary fame feem deftined to various meafures of duration. Some fpread into exuberance with a very fpeedy growth, but foon wither and decay; fome rife more flowly, but laft long. *Parnaffus* has its flowers of tranfient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among thofe whofe reputation is exhaufted in a fhort time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of prefent incidents or characters which ftrongly intereft the paffions, and engage univerfal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we difcufs a queftion which every one is defirous to underftand, which is debated in every affembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when

we diſplay the faults or virtues of him whoſe publick conduct has made almoſt every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of ſuch productions all the motives of intereſt and vanity concur; the diſputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his paſſion, and every man is deſirous to inform himſelf concerning affairs ſo vehemently agitated and variouſly repreſented.

It is ſcarcely to be imagined, through how many ſubordinations of intereſt the ardour of party is diffuſed; and what multitudes fancy themſelves affected by every ſatire or panegyrick on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occaſion to mention him with praiſe or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, as he wiſhes to confirm his opinion, and to ſtrengthen his party, will diligently peruſe every paper from which he can hope for ſentiments like his own. An object, however ſmall in itſelf, if placed near to the eye, will engroſs all the rays of light; and a tranſaction, however trivial, ſwells into importance when it preſſes immediately on our attention. He that ſhall peruſe the political pamphlets of any paſt reign, will wonder why they were ſo eagerly read, or ſo loudly praiſed. Many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confuſion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critick; and the time is coming, when the compoſitions of later hirelings ſhall lie equally deſpiſed. In proportion as thoſe who write on temporary ſubjects, are exalted above their merit at firſt, they are afterwards depreſſed below it; nor can the brigheſt elegance of diction, or moſt artful ſubtilty of reaſoning, hope

for

for much eſteem from thoſe whoſe regard is no longer quickened by curioſity or pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertiſts, even when they contend for philoſophical or theological truth, to be ſoon laid aſide and ſlighted. Either the queſtion is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and oppoſition; or mankind deſpair of underſtanding it, and grow weary of diſturbance, content themſelves with quiet ignorance, and refuſe to be haraſſed with labours which they have no hopes of recompenſing with knowledge.

The authors of new diſcoveries may ſurely expect to be reckoned among thoſe, whoſe writings are ſecure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obſcures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we ſeldom look back to the arguments upon which it was firſt eſtabliſhed, or can bear that tedioufneſs of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakneſs of novelty againſt obſtinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philoſophy is derived from *Boyle*'s diſcovery of the qualities of the air; yet of thoſe who now adopt or enlarge his theory, very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected; we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without enquiring what cavils were produced againſt him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themſelves to ſtudies boundleſs and inexhauſtible, as experiments and natural philoſophy. Theſe are always loſt in ſucceſſive compilations as new advances are made, and former obſervations become more familiar. Others ſpend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themſelves overwhelmed by ſubſequent collectors, that equally deſtroy the memory of their predeceſſors by amplification, tranſpoſition, or contraction. Every new ſyſtem of nature gives birth to a ſwarm of expoſitors, whoſe buſineſs is to explain and illuſtrate it, and who can hope to exiſt no longer than the founder of their ſect preſerves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of compoſition from which an author, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully ſtudied human nature, and can well deſcribe it, may with moſt reaſon flatter his ambition. *Bacon*, among all his pretenſions to the regard of poſterity, ſeems to have pleaſed himſelf chiefly with his Eſſays, *which come home to men's buſineſs and boſoms*, and of which, therefore, he declares his expectation, that they *will live as long as books laſt*. It may, however, ſatisfy an honeſt and benevolent mind to have been uſeful, though leſs conſpicuous; nor will he that extends his hope to higher rewards, be ſo much anxious to obtain praiſe, as to diſcharge the duty which Providence aſſigns him.

NUMB. 107. TUESDAY, *March* 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere verſibus ambo
Cæpere: alternos muſæ meminiſſe volebant. VIRG.

On themes alternate now the ſwains recite;
The muſes in alternate themes delight. ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the various cenſures, which the unavoidable compariſon of my performances with thoſe of my predeceſſors has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of thoſe changes of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhauſted novelty, and of that intermixture of ſubjects, or alternation of manner, by which other writers relieved wearineſs, and awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and ſolemn ſubjects in the ſame paper, becauſe it ſeems abſurd for an author to counteract himſelf, to preſs at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, or give medicines, which, like the double poiſon of *Dryden*, deſtroy the force of one another. I have endeavoured ſometimes to divert, and ſometimes to elevate; but have imagined it an uſeleſs attempt to diſturb merriment by ſolemnity, or interrupt ſeriouſneſs by drollery. Yet I ſhall this day publiſh two letters of very different tendency, which I hope, like tragi-comedy, may chance to pleaſe even when they are not critically approved.

To the RAMBLER.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleaſure in liſtening to the converſation of learned men, eſpecially when they diſcourſe of things which I do not underſtand; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many diſputes about the *alteration of the ſtile*, which, they ſay, is to be made by act of parliament.

One day when my mamma was gone out of the room, I aſked a very great ſcholar what the ſtile was? He told me, he was afraid I ſhould hardly underſtand him when he informed me, that it was the ſtated and eſtabliſhed method of computing time. It was not, indeed, likely that I ſhould underſtand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we ſhould be at ſo much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time paſt, or the time to come; but I have conſidered them both by myſelf, and think it as fooliſh to count time that is gone, as money that is ſpent; and as for the time which is to come, it only ſeems farther off by counting; and therefore when any pleaſure is promiſed me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I have ſince liſtened very attentively to every one that talked upon this ſubject, of whom the greater part ſeem not to underſtand it better than myſelf; for though they often hint how much the nation has been miſtaken, and rejoice that we are at laſt growing wiſer than our anceſtors, I have never been

able

able to diſcover from them, that any body has died ſooner or been married later for counting time wrong; and, therefore, I began to fancy, that there was a great buſtle with little conſequence.

At laſt, two friends of my papa, Mr. *Cycle*, and Mr. *Starlight*, being, it ſeems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new ſtile. Sweet Mr. *Starlight*—I am ſure I ſhall love his name as long as I live; for he told *Cycle* roundly, with a fierce look, that we ſhould never be right without a *year of confuſion*. Dear Mr. RAMBLER, did you ever hear any thing ſo charming? a whole year of confuſion! When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confuſion worth a thouſand nights of reſt; and if I can but ſee a year of confuſion, a whole year, of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feaſt, and there a maſquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and meſſages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and viſits, and frolicks, and new faſhions, I ſhall not care what they do with the reſt of the time, nor whether they count it by the old ſtile or the new; for I am reſolved to break looſe from the nurſery in the tumult, and play my part among the reſt; and it will be ſtrange if I cannot get a huſband and a chariot in the year of confuſion.

Cycle, who is neither ſo young nor ſo handſome as *Starlight*, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning; and indeed, if it ſhould come only to this, I think the new ſtile is a delightful thing; for my mamma ſays I ſhall go to court when I am ſixteen, and if they can but contrive often to

leap over eleven days together, the months of reſtraint will ſoon be at an end. It is ſtrange, that with all the plots that have been laid againſt time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or intereſt, get them but for once to deſtroy eleven months, and then I ſhall be as old as ſome married ladies. But this is deſired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. *Starlight*'s ſcheme; for nothing ſurely could pleaſe me like a year of confuſion, when I ſhall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-maſter one day, and the next for the muſick-maſter, but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and ſpend all my time without taſks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to preſcribed hours, or family-rules.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant,

PROPERANTIA.

Mr. RAMBLER,

I WAS ſeized this morning with an unuſual penſiveneſs, and finding that books only ſerved to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenneſs of the air and brightneſs of the ſun.

As I wandered wrapped up in thought, my eyes were ſtruck with the hoſpital for the reception of deſerted infants, which I ſurveyed with pleaſure, till by a natural train of ſentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what ſhelter can they

they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which perhaps are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick muſt be the tranſition from deluded virtue to ſhameleſs guilt, and from ſhameleſs guilt to hopeleſs wretchedneſs.

The anguiſh that I felt, left me no reſt till I had, by your means, addreſſed myſelf to the publick on behalf of thoſe forlorn creatures, the women of the town; whoſe miſery here might ſatisfy the moſt rigorous cenſor, and whoſe participation of our common nature might ſurely induce us to endeavour, at leaſt, their preſervation from eternal puniſhment.

Theſe were all once, if not virtuous, at leaſt innocent; and might ſtill have continued blameleſs and eaſy, but for the arts and inſinuations of thoſe whoſe rank, fortune, or education, furniſhed them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the ſituation of that woman, who, being forſaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the neceſſity of turning proſtitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

It cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful courſe of life, with ſhame, horror, and regret; but where can they hope for refuge; "*The world is not their friend, nor the world's law.*" Their ſighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their miſery, and threaten them with want or a gaol, if they ſhew the leaſt deſign of eſcaping from their bondage.

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is a taſk too hard for mortals; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the moſt limited power: yet the oppor-

tunities which every day affords of relieving the moſt wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal diſregard of policy and goodneſs.

There are places, indeed, ſet apart, to which theſe unhappy creatures may reſort, when the diſeaſes of incontinence ſeize upon them; but if they obtain a cure, to what are they reduced? Either to return with the ſmall remains of beauty to their former guilt, or periſh in the ſtreets with nakedneſs and hunger?

How frequently have the gay and thoughtleſs, in their evening frolicks, ſeen a band of theſe miſerable females, covered with rags, ſhivering with cold, and pining with hunger; and, without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon the cruelty of thoſe who perhaps firſt ſeduced them by careſſes of fondneſs, or magnificence of promiſes, go on to reduce others to the ſame wretchedneſs by the ſame means?

To ſtop the increaſe of this deplorable multitude, is undoubtedly the firſt and moſt preſſing conſideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and ſeverity are properly employed. But ſurely thoſe whom paſſion or intereſt have already depraved, have ſome claim to compaſſion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themſelves. Nor will they long groan in their preſent afflictions, if none were to refuſe them relief, but thoſe that owe their exemption from the ſame diſtreſs only to their wiſdom and their virtue.

I am, *&c.*

Amicus.

[library stamp]

NUMB. 108. SATURDAY, *March* 30, 1751.

Sapere aude,
Incipe. Vivendi rectè qui prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum. HOR.

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wiſe;
He who defers this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting ſtay,
Till the whole ſtream, which ſtop'd him, ſhould be gone,
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on.
COWLEY.

AN ancient poet, unreaſonably diſcontented at the preſent ſtate of things, which his ſyſtem of opinions obliged him to repreſent in its worſt form, has obſerved of the earth, "that its greater part is "covered by the uninhabitable ocean; that of the "reſt ſome is encumbered with naked mountains, "and ſome loſt under barren ſands; ſome ſcorched "with unintermitted heat, and ſome petrified with "perpetual froſt; ſo that only a few regions remain "for the production of fruits, the paſture of cattle, "and the accommodation of man."

The ſame obſervation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our preſent ſtate. When we have deducted all that is abſorbed in ſleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irreſiſtibly engroſſed by the tyranny of cuſtom; all that paſſes in regulating the ſuperficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility

lity to the difpofal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of difeafe, or ftolen imperceptibly away by laffitude and languor; we fhall find that part of our duration very fmall of which we can truly call ourfelves mafters, or which we can fpend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are loft in a rotation of petty cares, in a conftant recurrence of the fame employments; many of our provifions for eafe or happinefs are always exhaufted by the prefent day; and a great part of our exiftence ferves no other purpofe, than that of enabling us to enjoy the reft.

Of the few moments which are left in our difpofal, it may reafonably be expected, that we fhould be fo frugal, as to let none of them flip from us without fome equivalent; and perhaps it might be found, that as the earth, however ftraitened by rocks and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to confume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental diftraction, would yet afford us a large fpace vacant to the exercife of reafon and virtue; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances; and that we fquander much of our allowance, even while we think it fparing and infufficient.

This natural and neceffary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us infenfible of the negligence with which we fuffer them to flide away. We never confider ourfelves as poffeffed at once of time fufficient for any great defign, and therefore indulge ourfelves in fortuitous amufements. We think it unneceffary to take an account of a few fupernumerary moments, which, however employed, could

could have produced little advantage, and which were expofed to a thoufand chances of difturbance and interruption.

It is obfervable, that either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjuft great things by divifion, and little things by accumulation. Of extenfive furfaces we can only take a furvey, as the parts fucceed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive, till they are united unto maffes. Thus we break the vaft periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we muft agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parfimonious anceftors have informed us, that the fatal wafte of fortune is by fmall expences, by the profufion of fums too little fingly to alarm our caution, and which we never fuffer ourfelves to confider together. Of the fame kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with fatisfaction upon paft years, muft learn to know the prefent value of fingle minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall ufelefs to the ground.

It is ufual for thofe who are advifed to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themfelves as required to change the general courfe of their conduct, to difmifs bufinefs, and exclude pleafure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that fhould fteadily and refolutely affign to any fcience or language thofe interftitial vacancies which intervene in the moft crowded variety of diverfion or employment,

ment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and difcover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perfeverance, than from violent efforts and fudden defires; efforts which are foon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and defires which, if they are indulged too often, will fhake off the authority of reafon, and range capricioufly from one object to another.

The difpofition to defer every important defign to a time of leifure, and a ftate of fettled uniformity, proceeds generally from a falfe eftimate of the human powers. If we except thofe gigantick and ftupendous intelligences who are faid to grafp a fyftem by intuition, and bound forward from one feries of conclufions to another, without regular fteps through intermediate propofitions, the moft fuccefsful ftudents make their advances in knowledge by fhort flights, between each of which the mind may lie at reft. For every fingle act of progreffion a fhort time is fufficient; and it is only neceffary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to fevere and laborious meditation; and when a fuccefsful attack on knowledge has been made, the ftudent recreates himfelf with the contemplation of his conqueft, and forbears another incurfion, till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiofity calls upon him for frefh gratifications. Whether the time of intermiffion is fpent in company, or in folitude, in neceffary bufinefs, or in voluntary levities, the underftanding is equally abftracted from the object of enquiry; but, perhaps, if it be detained by occupations lefs pleafing, it returns again to ftudy with greater alacrity,

than

than when it is glutted with ideal pleafures, and furfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not fuffer himfelf to be difcouraged by fancied impoffibilities, may fometimes find his abilities invigorated by the neceffity of exerting them in fhort intervals, as the force of a current is increafed by the contraction of its channel.

From fome caufe like this, it has probably proceeded, that among thofe who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have rifen to eminence in oppofition to all the obftacles which external circumftances could place in their way, amidft the tumult of bufinefs, the diftreffes of poverty, or the diffipations of a wandering and unfettled ftate. A great part of the life of *Erafmus* was one continual peregrination; ill fupplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means by unfhaken conftancy, and a vigilant improvement of thofe hours, which, in the midft of the moft reftlefs activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the fame condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and folicitation, and fo much verfed in common life, that he has tranfmitted to us the moft perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world, fuch application to books, that he will ftand for ever in the firft rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he fufficiently difcovers, by informing us, that the *Praife of Folly*, one of his

moft

most celebrated performances, was composed by him on the road to *Italy*; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit insidendum, illiteratis fabulis terreretur*, lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattled away without regard to literature.

An *Italian* philosopher expressed in his motto, that *time was his estate*; an estate indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be over-run with noxious plants, or laid out for shew rather than for use.

NUMB. 109. TUESDAY, *April* 2, 1751.

Gratum eſt, quod patriæ civem, populoque dediſti,
Si facis ut patriæ ſit idoneus, utilis agis,
Utilis et bellorum et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit, quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus inſtitutas. JUV.

Grateful the gift! a member to the ſtate,
If you that member uſeful ſhall create;
Train'd both to war, and when the war ſhall ceaſe,
As fond, as fit t'improve the arts of peace.
For much it boots which way you train your boy,
The hopeful object of your future joy. ELPHINSTON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you ſeem to have taken a view ſufficiently extenſive of the miſeries of life, and have employed much of your ſpeculation on mournful ſubjects, you have not yet exhauſted the whole ſtock of human infelicity. There is ſtill a ſpecies of wretchedneſs which eſcapes your obſervation, though it might ſupply you with many ſage remarks, and ſalutary cautions.

I cannot but imagine the ſtart of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this inſtant ſee the Rambler ſnuffing his candle, rubbing his ſpectacles, ſtirring his fire, locking out interruption, and ſettling himſelf in his eaſy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without diſturbance. For, whether it be that continued ſickneſs or misfortune has

acquainted you only with the bitternefs of being; or that you imagine none but yourfelf able to difcover what I fuppofe has been feen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world: whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the publick; or fancy that you have fome particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain, that whatever be your fubject, melancholy for the moft part burfts in upon your fpeculation, your gaiety is quickly overcaft, and though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleafantry, they are feldom difmiffed but with heavy hearts.

That I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own fyllables of fadnefs, I will inform you that I was condemned by fome difaftrous influence to be an only fon, born to the apparent profpect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life when fatiety of common diverfions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenfenefs. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feafts, and dances, and bagpipes; congratulations were fent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents difcovered in my firft cries fuch tokens of future virtue and underftanding, that they declared themfelves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happinefs and the increafe of their eftate.

The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both

kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in playhouses, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time called in as auxiliaries against the intrusion of thought.

When there is such a parity between two persons associated for life, the dejection which the husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for want of superiority, sinks him to submissiveness. My mamma therefore governed the family without controul; and except that my father still retained some authority in the stables, and now and then, after a supernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or china dish to prove his sovereignty, the whole course of the year was regulated by her direction, the servants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or dismissed at her discretion.

She therefore thought herself entitled to the superintendance of her son's education; and when my father, at the instigation of the parson, faintly proposed that I should be sent to school, very positively told him, that she would not suffer so fine a child to be ruined; that she never knew any boys at a grammar-school that could come into a room without blushing, or sit at the table without some awkward uneasiness; that they were always putting themselves into danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company; and that, for her part, she would rather follow me to the grave, than see me tear my clothes, and hang down my head, and sneak about with dirty shoes and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his proposal than to appear wise and manly, soon acquiesced,

ſince I was not to live by my learning; for indeed he had known very few ſtudents that had not ſome ſtiffneſs in their manner. They therefore agreed, that a domeſtick tutor ſhould be procured, and hired an honeſt gentleman of mean converſation and narrow ſentiments, but whom, having paſſed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a ſcholar. He thought himſelf ſufficiently exalted by being placed at the ſame table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmoſt flexibility of ſubmiſſion to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, leſt I ſhould mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally bruſhed my coat before he diſmiſſed me into the parlour.

He had no occaſion to complain of too burdenſome an employment; for my mother very judiciouſly conſidered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and ſuffered me not to paſs any more time in his apartment than my leſſon required. When I was ſummoned to my taſk, ſhe enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was ſeldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admoniſhed not to lean on my chair, croſs my legs, or ſwing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very ſeriouſly deliberated upon his total diſmiſſion, becauſe I began, ſhe ſaid, to learn his manner of ſticking on my hat, and had his bend in my ſhoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I eſcaped all theſe depravities; and when I was only twelve years

old,

old, had rid myſelf of every appearance of childiſh diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickneſs of my replies; and many a ſcholar five years older than myſelf have I daſhed into confuſion by the ſteadineſs of my countenance, ſilenced by my readineſs of repartee, and tortured with envy by the addreſs with which I picked up a fan, preſented a ſnuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At fourteen I was completely ſkilled in all the niceties of dreſs, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of ſilks, and diſtinguiſh the product of a *French* loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and obſerve every deviation from the reigning mode. I was univerſally ſkilful in all the changes of expenſive finery; but as every one, they ſay, has ſomething to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in *Bruſſels* lace.

The next year ſaw me advanced to the truſt and power of adjuſting the ceremonial of an aſſembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every ſtranger applied for introduction. My heart now diſdained the inſtructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a ſmall annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myſelf.

In a ſhort time I came to *London*, and as my father was well known among the higher claſſes of life, ſoon obtained admiſſion to the moſt ſplendid aſſemblies and moſt crowded card-tables. Here I found myſelf univerſally careſſed and applauded: the ladies praiſed the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the ſoftneſs of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themſelves to my notice; and

invited by a thousand oblique solicitations my attendance to the playhouse, and my salutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception; I passed every morning in dress, every afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness, by varied amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness nearly bordering on compassion; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings, by treating me with contempt. One of these witlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffeehouse the price of patches; and another whispered that he wondered why miss *Frisk* did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard

regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made my addreſſes, ſuffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myſelf welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either uſe or dignity to life, are content to paſs their hours between their bed and their cards, without eſteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr. RAMBLER, that I have reaſon to complain; for ſurely the females ought to pay ſome regard to the age of him whoſe youth was paſſed in endeavours to pleaſe them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to puniſh it in the man. Yet I find, that though they laviſh their firſt fondneſs upon pertneſs and gaiety, they ſoon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their laſt years in ſtupidity and contempt.

I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

NUMB. 110. SATURDAY, *April* 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum
Lux iter eſt, et clara dies, et gratia ſimplex.
Spem ſequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris,
Ad quæ non veniunt præſentis gaudia vitæ,
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.

PRUDENTIUS.

We thro' this maze of life one Lord obey;
Whoſe light and grace unerring, lead the way.
By hope and faith ſecure of future bliſs,
Gladly the joys of preſent life we miſs:
For baffled mortals ſtill attempt in vain,
Preſent and future bliſs at once to gain. F. LEWIS.

THAT to pleaſe the Lord and Father of the univerſe, is the ſupreme intereſt of created and dependent beings, as it is eaſily proved, has been univerſally confeſſed; and ſince all rational agents are conſcious of having neglected or violated the duties preſcribed to them, the fear of being rejected, or puniſhed by God, has always burdened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of divine favour, therefore conſtitutes a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and intereſt tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may ſometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at leaſt ſhew the general conſent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of

of the divine nature. That God will forgive, may, indeed, be eſtabliſhed as the firſt and fundamental truth of religion; for though the knowledge of his exiſtence is the origin of philoſophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no proſpect of enjoying the protection or regard of him, whom the leaſt deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a creator, whom he muſt conſider as a governor too pure to be pleaſed, and too ſevere to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wiſe, and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, eſcape, nor reſiſt.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A conſtant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terreſtrial diligence; and therefore the progreſs of life could only have been the natural deſcent of negligent deſpair from crime to crime, had not the univerſal perſuaſion of forgiveneſs to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled thoſe to the paths of virtue whom their paſſions had ſolicited aſide; and animated to new attempts, and firmer perſeverance, thoſe whom difficulty had diſcouraged, or negligence ſurpriſed.

In times and regions ſo disjoined from each other, that there can ſcarcely be imagined any communication of ſentiments either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal auſterities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflic-

tions, and appeaſing his juſtice by a ſpeedy and cheerful ſubmiſſion to a leſs penalty when a greater is incurred.

Incorporated minds will always feel ſome inclination towards exterior acts, and ritual obſervances. Ideas not repreſented by ſenſible objects are fleeting, variable, and evaneſcent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by ſome certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once eſtabliſh the neceſſary proportion between crimes and ſufferings, might ſecurely reſt upon his performance of the expiation; but while ſafety remains the reward only of mental purity, he is always afraid leſt he ſhould decide too ſoon in his own favour, leſt he ſhould not have felt the pangs of true contrition; leſt he ſhould miſtake ſatiety for deteſtation, or imagine that his paſſions are ſubdued when they are only ſleeping.

From this natural and reaſonable diffidence aroſe, in humble and timorous piety, a diſpoſition to confound penance with repentance, to repoſe on human determinations, and to receive from ſome judicial ſentence the ſtated and regular aſſignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without reſource: we ſeek in the knowledge of others a ſuccour for our own ignorance, and are ready to truſt any that will undertake to direct us when we have no confidence in ourſelves.

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This deſire to aſcertain by ſome outward marks the ſtate of the ſoul, and this willingneſs to calm the conſcience by ſome ſettled method, have produced, as they are diverſified in their effects by various tempers and principles, moſt of the diſquiſitions and rules, the doubts and ſolutions, that have embarraſſed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable ſcruples concerning the neceſſary meaſures of ſorrow, and adequate degrees of ſelf-abhorrence; and theſe rules corrupted by fraud, or debaſed by credulity, have, by the common reſiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all ſubſidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole diſcipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practiſed, is, if it be explained without ſuperſtition, eaſily underſtood. *Repentance is the relinquiſhment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God.* Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts, but adjuncts of repentance; yet they are too cloſely connected with it, to be eaſily ſeparated; for they not only mark its ſincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obſtinacy, by which his ſafety or happineſs in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorſe. He who is fully convinced, that he ſuffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miſcarriage to its firſt cauſe, to image to himſelf a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary reſolutions againſt the like fault, even when he knows

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that he ſhall never again have the power of committing it. Danger conſidered as imminent, naturally produces ſuch trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of ſafety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terror, is every moment ſeized with uſeleſs anxieties, adding one ſecurity to another, trembling with ſudden doubts, and diſtracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whoſe crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without diſturbance, or can at will baniſh the reflection; if he who conſiders himſelf as ſuſpended over the abyſs of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which muſt ſoon part by its own weakneſs, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can caſt his eyes round him without ſhuddering with horror, or panting with ſecurity; what can he judge of himſelf but that he is not yet awakened to ſufficient conviction, ſince every loſs is more lamented than the loſs of the divine favour, and every danger more dreaded than the danger of final condemnation?

Retirement from the cares and pleaſures of the world has been often recommended as uſeful to repentance. This at leaſt is evident, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occaſions: and ſurely the retroſpect of life, the diſentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumſtances and diffuſed in various relations, the diſcovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of luſts and appetites deeply rooted and widely ſpread, may be allowed to demand ſome ſeceſſion from ſport

and noiſe, and buſineſs and folly. Some ſuſpenſion of common affairs, ſome pauſe of temporal pain and pleaſure, is doubtleſs neceſſary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miſcarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only queſtion in which miſtake cannot be rectified.

Auſterities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and rouſed, by which the attractions of pleaſure are interrupted, and the chains of ſenſuality are broken. It is obſerved by one of the fathers, that *he who reſtrains himſelf in the uſe of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden.* Abſtinence, if nothing more, is, at leaſt, a cautious retreat from the utmoſt verge of permiſſion, and confers that ſecurity which cannot be reaſonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of deſtruction, or delights to approach the pleaſures which he knows it fatal to partake. Auſterity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diſeaſes of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we ſhould readily have recourſe, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and ſum of repentance is a change of life. That ſorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our eſcape, that auſterity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But ſorrow and terror muſt naturally precede reformation; for what other cauſe can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himſelf alarmed by his conſcience, anxious for the attain-

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ment of a better ſtate, and afflicted by the memory of his paſt faults, may juſtly conclude, that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of ſtrengthening his conviction, to impreſs upon his mind ſuch a ſenſe of the divine preſence, as may overpower the blandiſhments of ſecular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holineſs to another, till death ſhall ſet him free from doubt and conteſt, miſery and temptation.

What better can we do than proſtrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confeſs
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Wat'ring the ground, and with our ſighs the air
Frequenting, ſent from hearts contrite, in ſign
Of ſorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?

NUMB. 111. TUESDAY, *April* 9, 1751.

Φρονεῖν γὰρ οἱ ταχεῖς, ἐκ ἀσφαλεῖς. SOPHOC.

Diſaſter always waits on early wit.

IT has been obſerved, by long experience, that late ſprings produce the greateſt plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the moſt part liberally recompenſed by the exuberance and fecundity of the enſuing ſeaſons; the bloſſoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the ſun is high, eſcape thoſe chilling blaſts, and nocturnal froſts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the firſt ſmiles of vernal beauty, deſtroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the gem, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of perſuading the young and ſprightly part of my readers, upon whom the ſpring naturally forces my attention, to learn from the great proceſs of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between ſpeed and precipitation; to proſecute their deſigns with calmneſs, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprize and hope; having yet no occaſion of comparing our force with any oppoſing power, we naturally form preſumptions in our own favour, and imagine that

that obſtruction and impediment will give way before us. The firſt repulſes rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it ſuſpects its own weakneſs, or ſubmits to ſap the difficulties which it expected to ſubdue by ſtorm. Before diſappointments have enforced the dictates of philoſophy, we believe it in our power to ſhorten the interval between the firſt cauſe and the laſt effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding induſtry, and fancy that, by increaſing the fire, we can at pleaſure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promiſes of time ſufficient for the regular maturation of our ſchemes, and a long enjoyment of our acquiſitions, we are eager to ſeize the preſent moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without ſuffering it to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the varieties of delight into a narrow compaſs; but age ſeldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have leſs remaining, and ſuffer the laſt part of life to ſteal from us in languid preparations for future undertakings, or ſlow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of ſome fortuitous occurrence, or drowſy equilibrations of undetermined counſel: whether it be that the aged, having taſted the pleaſures of man's condition, and found them deluſive, become leſs anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miſcarriages have depreſſed them to deſpair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death ſhocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themſelves of their decay, or to

diſcover to their own hearts, that the time of trifling is paſt.

A perpetual conflict with natural deſires ſeems to be the lot of our preſent ſtate. In youth we require ſomething of the tardineſs and frigidity of age; and in age we muſt labour to recall the fire and impetuoſity of youth; in youth we muſt learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

The torment of expectation is, indeed, not eaſily to be borne at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flaſhes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every freſh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new deſire. Yet ſince the fear of miſſing what we ſeek, muſt always be proportionable to the happineſs expected from poſſeſſing it, the paſſions, even in this tempeſtuous ſtate, might be ſomewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the miſchief of temerity, and the hazard of loſing that which we endeavour to ſeize before our time.

He that too early aſpires to honours, muſt reſolve to encounter not only the oppoſition of intereſt, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures, and uncertain projects; and he that haſtens too ſpeedily to reputation, often raiſes his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himſelf in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may ſhake off, or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended by ſome, even to the gifts of nature; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickneſs of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge,

appearing

appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; but have observed, that after a short effort they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the even and regular perseverance of slower understandings.

It frequently happens, that applause abates diligence. Whoever finds himself to have performed more than was demanded, will be contented to spare the labour of unnecessary performances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He whom success has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himself able to leave behind whenever he shall again summon his force to the contest. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate attention, and weaken constancy; nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius, too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being caressed, distinguished, and admired, easily seduces the student from literary solitude. He is ready to follow the call which summons him to hear his own praise, and which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleasures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleasures which he

conceives inexhauſtible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to diſtruſt.

Theſe evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or conſidered as inſeparable from an early diſplay of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly eſcaped by prudence and reſolution, and muſt therefore be recounted rather as conſolations to thoſe who are leſs liberally endowed, than as diſcouragements to ſuch as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the perſecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raiſe the flames of unlawful love; yet among the ladies whom prudence or modeſty have made moſt eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniencies of an amiable form? or would have purchaſed ſafety by the loſs of charms?

Neither grace of perſon, nor vigour of underſtanding, are to be regarded otherwiſe than as bleſſings, as means of happineſs indulged by the Supreme Benefactor; but the advantages of either may be loſt by too much eagerneſs to obtain them. A thouſand beauties in their firſt bloſſom, by an imprudent expoſure to the open world, have ſuddenly withered at the blaſt of infamy; and men who might have ſubjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praiſe of their firſt productions from academical retirement, and waſted their days in vice and dependence. The virgin who too ſoon aſpires to celebrity and conqueſt, periſhes by childiſh vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltleſs indiſcretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loſes thoſe years which might have been moſt

 uſefully

ufefully employed, the years of youth, of fpirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable abfurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need it moft; we are in hafte to meet enemies whom we have not ftrength to overcome, and to undertake tafks which we cannot perform: and as he that once mifcarries does not eafily perfuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual ftruggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obfcurity.

NUMB. 112. SATURDAY, *April* 13, 1751.

In mea vefanas habui difpendia vires,
Et valui pœnas fortis in ipfe meas. OVID.

Of ftrength pernicious to myfelf I boaft;
The pow'rs I have were giv'n me to my coft. F. LEWIS.

WE are taught by *Celfus*, that health is beft preferved by avoiding fettled habits of life, and deviating fometimes into flight aberrations from the laws of medicine; by varying the proportions of food and exercife, interrupting the fucceffions of reft and labour, and mingling hardfhips with indulgence. The body, long accuftomed to ftated quantities and uniform periods, is difordered by the fmalleft irregularity; and fince we cannot adjuft every day by the balance or barometer, it is fit fometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may be able to comply with

with neceſſary affairs, or ſtrong inclinations. He that too long obſerves nice punctualities, condemns himſelf to voluntary imbecility, and will not long eſcape the miſeries of diſeaſe.

The ſame laxity of regimen is equally neceſſary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual ſuſceptibility of occaſional pleaſure. Long confinement to the ſame company which perhaps ſimilitude of taſte brought firſt together, quickly contracts his faculties, and makes a thouſand things offenſive that are in themſelves indifferent; a man accuſtomed to hear only the echo of his own ſentiments, ſoon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratifications of mankind.

In things which are not immediately ſubject to religious or moral conſideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Senſibility may, by an inceſſant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderneſs inconſiſtent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the ſmalleſt aſperity, and vulnerable by the gentleſt touch. He that pleaſes himſelf too much with minute exactneſs, and ſubmits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or addreſs, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the crowd of life, be haraſſed with innumerable diſtreſſes, from which thoſe who have not in the ſame manner increaſed their ſenſations find no diſturbance. His exotick ſoftneſs will ſhrink at the coarſeneſs of vulgar felicity, like a plant tranſplanted to northern nurſeries, from the dews and ſunſhine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and, therefore, if we al-

low not ourſelves to be ſatisfied while we can perceive any error or defect, we muſt refer our hopes of eaſe to ſome other period of exiſtence. It is well known, that, expoſed to a microſcope, the ſmootheſt poliſh of the moſt ſolid bodies diſcovers cavities and prominences; and that the ſofteſt bloom of roſeate virginity repels the eye with excreſcences and diſcolorations. The perceptions as well as the ſenſes may be improved to our own diſquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of diſlike, raiſe in time an artificial faſtidiouſneſs, which ſhall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, ſhew us the naked ſkeleton of every delight, and preſent us only with the pains of pleaſure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peeviſhneſs, indeed, would perhaps very little diſturb the peace of mankind, were it always the conſequence of ſuperfluous delicacy; for it is the privilege only of deep reflection, or lively fancy, to deſtroy happineſs by art and refinement. But by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undiſputed ſuperiority, the dull and thoughtleſs may likewiſe acquire the power of tormenting themſelves and others, and become ſufficiently ridiculous or hateful to thoſe who are within ſight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a ſingle ſtate are generally found to be moroſe, fretful, and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; ſoon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any aſſociation, but with thoſe that will watch their nod, and ſubmit themſelves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the

the neceſſity of conſulting any inclination but their own.

The iraſcibility of this claſs of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, ſuch as are incident to underſtandings not far extended beyond the inſtincts of animal life; but unhappily he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long ceſſations of anger. There are many veterans of luxury upon whom every noon brings a paroxyſm of violence, fury, and execration; they never ſit down to their dinner without finding the meat ſo injudiciouſly bought, or ſo unſkilfully dreſſed, ſuch blunders in the ſeaſoning, or ſuch improprieties in the ſauce, as can ſcarcely be expiated without blood; and, in the tranſports of reſentment, make very little diſtinctions between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their diſcontent, upon all whom fortune expoſes to the ſtorm.

It is not eaſy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependence on a peeviſh man. In every other ſtate of inferiority the certainty of pleaſing is perpetually increaſed by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindneſs and confidence are ſtrengthened by every new act of truſt, and proof of fidelity. But peeviſhneſs ſacrifices to a momentary offence, the obſequiouſneſs or uſefulneſs of half a life, and as more is performed, increaſes her exactions.

Chryſalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his ſons. The boy was diſmiſſed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank; cautioned againſt all oppo-

ſition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perſeverance by the hopes of ſupporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of ſentiment; and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice; patiently endured contradictory reproofs; heard falſe accuſations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply; laughed obſtreperouſly at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; aſked queſtions about the univerſal decay of trade; admired the ſtrength of thoſe heads by which the price of ſtocks is changed and adjuſted; and behaved with ſuch prudence and circumſpection, that after ſix years the will was made, and *Juvenculus* was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him: the old man tore his will, and being then perceptibly declining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are imbittered by age or ſolitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and ſpiteful ſuperintendence of domeſtick trifles. *Eriphile* has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of ſervants, the naſtineſs of her houſe, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preſerving tapeſtry from the moths, and the careleſneſs of the ſluts whom ſhe employs in bruſhing it. It is her buſineſs every morning to viſit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window ſhut or open contrary to her orders, a ſpot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the reſt of the

day

day may be juſtifiably ſpent in taunts of contempt, and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpoſe but to preſerve the neatneſs of a houſe and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleaſure, nor aſpiration after virtue, while ſhe is engroſſed by the great employment of keeping gravel from graſs, and wainſcot from duſt. Of three amiable nieces ſhe has declared herſelf an irreconcilable enemy to one, becauſe ſhe broke off a tulip with her hoop; to another, becauſe ſhe ſpilt her coffee on a Turkey carpet; and to the third, becauſe ſhe let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourſe of viſits, becauſe company makes a houſe dirty; and reſolves to confine herſelf more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by fooliſh lenity.

Peeviſhneſs is generally the vice of narrow minds, and, except when it is the effect of anguiſh and diſeaſe, by which the reſolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble to bear the lighteſt addition to its miſeries, proceeds from an unreaſonable perſuaſion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy againſt it is, to conſider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of ſuffering perturbation and uneaſineſs from cauſes unworthy of our notice.

He that reſigns his peace to little caſualties, and ſuffers the courſe of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadvertencies, or offences, delivers up himſelf to the direction of the wind, and loſes all that conſtancy and equanimity which conſtitute the chief praiſe of a wiſe man.

The province of prudence lies between the greatest things and the leaſt; ſome ſurpaſs our power by their magnitude, and ſome eſcape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indiſpenſable buſineſs of life will afford ſufficient exerciſe to every underſtanding; and ſuch is the limitation of the human powers, that by attention to trifles we muſt let things of importance paſs unobſerved: when we examine a mite with a glaſs, we ſee nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's intereſt to be pleaſed, will need little proof: that it is his intereſt to pleaſe others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not leſs neceſſary to happineſs than to virtue, that he rid his mind of paſſions which make him uneaſy to himſelf, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects, and obſtruct his improvement.

NUMB. 113. TUESDAY, *April* 16, 1751.

——Uxorem, Poſthume ducis?
Dic quâ Tiſiphone, quibus exagitare colubris? JUV.

A ſober man like thee to change his life!
What fury wou'd poſſeſs thee with a wife? DRYDEN.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I KNOW not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat cenſure with contempt. We owe ſo much reverence to the wiſdom of mankind, as juſtly to wiſh, that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of other ſuffrages; and ſince guilt and infamy muſt have the ſame effect upon intelligences unable to pierce beyond external appearance, and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a falſe charge, leſt we ſhould countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accuſation with ſupercilious ſilence, is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villany, and inſpirited by innocence. The wall of braſs which *Horace* erects upon a clear conſcience, may be ſometimes raiſed by impudence or power; and we ſhould always wiſh to preſerve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces which wickedneſs cannot aſſume.

For this reaſon I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or ſullen reſignation, a reproach,

reproach, which is, at leaſt in my opinion, unjuſt; but will lay my caſe honeſtly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

Whether you will be able to preſerve your boaſted impartiality, when you hear, that I am conſidered as an adverſary by half the female world, you may ſurely pardon me for doubting, notwithſtanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourſelf entitled by your age, your learning, your abſtraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. Rambler, has often overpowered the reſolutions of the firm, and the reaſonings of the wiſe, rouſed the old to ſenſibility, and ſubdued the rigorous to ſoftneſs.

I am one of thoſe unhappy beings, who have been marked out as huſbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have diſcuſſed all the nuptial preliminaries ſo often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are ſettled, pin-money ſecured, and proviſions for younger children aſcertained; but am at laſt doomed by general conſent to everlaſting ſolitude, and excluded by an irreverſible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother, as a man whoſe viſits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raiſes hopes only to embitter diſappointment, and makes offers only to ſeduce girls into a waſte of that part of life, in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become miſtreſſes and mothers.

I hope you will think, that ſome part of this penal ſeverity may juſtly be remitted, when I inform you, that I never yet profeſſed love to a woman without ſincere intentions of marriage; that I have never

continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination changed, but to preferve her whom I was leaving from the fhock of abruptnefs, or the ignominy of contempt; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportunity of feeming to difcard me; and that I never forfook a miftrefs for larger fortune, or brighter beauty, but becaufe I difcovered fome irregularity in her conduct, or fome depravity in her mind; not becaufe I was charmed by another, but becaufe I was offended by herfelf.

I was very early tired of that fucceffion of amufements by which the thoughts of moft young men are diffipated, and had not long glittered in the fplendour of an ample patrimony before I wifhed for the calm of domeftick happinefs. Youth is naturally delighted with fprightlinefs and ardour, and therefore I breathed out the fighs of my firft affection at the feet of the gay, the fparkling, the vivacious *Ferocula*. I fancied to myfelf a perpetual fource of happinefs in wit never exhaufted, and fpirit never depreffed; looked with veneration on her readinefs of expedients, contempt of difficulty, affurance of addrefs, and promptitude of reply; confidered her as exempt by fome prerogative of nature from the weaknefs and timidity of female minds; and congratulated myfelf upon a companion fuperior to all common troubles and embarraffments. I was, indeed, fomewhat difturbed by the unfhaken perfeverance with which fhe enforced her demands of an unreafonable fettlement; yet I fhould have confented to pafs my life in union with her, had not

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my curiofity led me to a crowd gathered in the ftreet, where I found *Ferocula*, in the prefence of hundreds, difputing for fix-pence with a chairman. I faw her in fo little need of affiftance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interpofition, and I fpared myfelf the fhame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot fome point of ceremony at our next interview, and foon provoked her to forbid me her prefence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philofophy. I had frequently obferved the barrennefs and uniformity of connubial converfation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and difcernment, when I felected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read *Mifothea*, who declared herfelf the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertnefs, and puerile levity; and fcarcely condefcended to make tea, but for the linguift, the geometrician, the aftronomer, or the poet. The queen of the *Amazons* was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in fingle combat; and *Mifothea*'s heart was only to blefs the fcholar who could overpower her by difputation. Amidft the fondeft tranfports of courtfhip fhe could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular fyllogifm. You may eafily imagine, that I wifhed this courtfhip at an end; but when I defired her to fhorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long converfation, in which *Mifothea* endeavoured to demonftrate the folly of attributing choice and felf-direction to any human being,

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It was not difficult to difcover the danger of committing myfelf for ever to the arms of one who might at any time miftake the dictates of paffion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate; or confider cuckoldom as neceffary to the general fyftem, as a link in the everlafting chain of fucceffive caufes. I therefore told her, that deftiny had ordained us to part, and that nothing fhould have torn me from her but the talons of neceffity.

I then folicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the economical *Sophronia*, a lady who confidered wit as dangerous, and learning as fuperfluous, and thought that the woman who kept her houfe clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a fudden call, enquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of ftocks once a week, and purchafed every thing at the beft market, could want no accomplifhments neceffary to the happinefs of a wife man. She difcourfed with great folemnity on the care and vigilance which the fuperintendence of a family demands; obferved how many were ruined by confidence in fervants; and told me, that fhe never expected honefty but from a ftrong cheft, and that the beft ftorekeeper was the miftrefs's eye. Many fuch oracles of generofity fhe uttered, and made every day new improvements in her fchemes for the regulation of her fervants, and the diftribution of her time. I was convinced, that whatever I might fuffer from *Sophronia*, I fhould efcape poverty; and we therefore proceeded to adjuft the fettlements according to her own rule, *fair and foftly*. But one morning her maid came to me in tears to intreat my in-

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tereſt for a reconciliation to her miſtreſs, who had turned her out at night for breaking ſix teeth in a tortoiſe-ſhell comb: ſhe had attended her lady from a diſtant province, and having not lived long enough to ſave much money, was deſtitute among ſtrangers, and though of a good family, in danger of periſhing in the ſtreets, or of being compelled by hunger to proſtitution. I made no ſcruple of promiſing to reſtore her; but upon my firſt application to *Sophronia*, was anſwered with an air which called for approbation, that if ſhe neglected her own affairs, I might ſuſpect her of neglecting mine; that the comb ſtood her in three half-crowns; that no ſervant ſhould wrong her twice; and that indeed ſhe took the firſt opportunity of parting with *Phillida*, becauſe, though ſhe was honeſt, her conſtitution was bad, and ſhe thought her very likely to fall ſick. Of our conference I need not tell you the effect; it ſurely may be forgiven me, if on this occaſion I forgot the decency of common forms.

From two more ladies I was diſengaged by finding, that they entertained my rivals at the ſame time, and determined their choice by the liberality of our ſettlements. Another I thought myſelf juſtified in forſaking, becauſe ſhe gave my attorney a bribe to favour her in the bargain; another becauſe I could never ſoften her to tenderneſs, till ſhe heard that moſt of my family had died young; and another, becauſe, to increaſe her fortune by expectations, ſhe repreſented her ſiſter as languiſhing and conſumptive.

I ſhall in another letter give the remaining part of my hiſtory of courtſhip. I preſume that I ſhould

hitherto have injured the majeſty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit.

I am, &c.

Hymenæus.

Numb. 114. Saturday, *April* 20, 1751.

——*Audi,*
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa eſt. Juv.

——When man's life is in debate,
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate. Dryden.

POWER and ſuperiority are ſo flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation and expoſed to danger as they are, ſcarcely any virtue is ſo cautious, or any prudence ſo timorous, as to decline them. Even thoſe that have moſt reverence for the laws of right, are pleaſed with ſhewing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply, rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wiſh to paſs; and, as the *Roman* ſatiriſt remarks, he that has no deſign to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the ſame principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the deſire of inveſting lawful authority with terror, and governing by force rather than perſuaſion. Pride is unwilling to believe the neceſſity of aſſigning any other reaſon

reaſon than her own will; and would rather maintain the moſt equitable claims by violence and penalties, than deſcend from the dignity of command to diſpute and expoſtulation.

It may, I think, be ſuſpected, that this political arrogance has ſometimes found its way into legiſlative aſſemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A ſlight peruſal of the laws by which the meaſures of vindictive and coercive juſtice are eſtabliſhed, will diſcover ſo many diſproportions between crimes and puniſhments, ſuch capricious diſtinctions of guilt, and ſuch confuſion of remiſſneſs and ſeverity, as can ſcarcely be believed to have been produced by publick wiſdom, ſincerely and calmly ſtudious of publick happineſs.

The learned, the judicious, the pious *Boerhaave* relates, that he never ſaw a criminal dragged to execution without aſking himſelf, "Who knows "whether this man is not leſs culpable than me?" On the days when the priſons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every ſpectator of the dreadful proceſſion put the ſame queſtion to his own heart. Few among thoſe that crowd in thouſands to the legal maſſacre, and look with careleſneſs, perhaps with triumph, on the utmoſt exacerbations of human miſery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection. For, who can congratulate himſelf upon a life paſſed without ſome act more miſchievous to the peace or proſperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular ſpecies of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its ſuppreſſion by capital de-

nunciations.

nunciations. Thus, one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their ſucceſſors are frighted into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and ſubtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the purſuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice, capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally ſubjected to the ſevereſt puniſhment that man has the power of exerciſing upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to eſtimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loſs or pain which ſingle acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety ariſing from the fear of miſchief, and inſecurity of poſſeſſion: he therefore exerciſes the right which ſocieties are ſuppoſed to have over the lives of thoſe that compoſe them, not ſimply to puniſh a tranſgreſſion, but to maintain order, and preſerve quiet; he enforces thoſe laws with ſeverity that are moſt in danger of violation, as the commander of a garriſon doubles the guard on that ſide which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with ſo little ſucceſs, that rapine and violence are hourly increaſing: yet few ſeem willing to deſpair of its efficacy, and of thoſe who employ their ſpeculations upon the preſent corruption of the people, ſome propoſe the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrifick puniſhments; ſome are inclined to accelerate the executions; ſome to diſcourage pardons; and all ſeem to think that lenity has given

confidence to wickedneſs, and that we can only be reſcued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour, and ſanguinary juſtice.

Yet ſince the right of ſetting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been diſputed, and ſince experience of paſt times gives us little reaſon to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havock of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be uſeleſs to conſider what conſequences might ariſe from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients obſerves, τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of dreadful things the moſt dreadful*; an evil, beyond which nothing can be threatened by ſublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror ſhould, therefore, be reſerved as the laſt reſort of authority, as the ſtrongeſt and moſt operative of prohibitory ſanctions, and placed before the treaſure of life, to guard from invaſion what cannot be reſtored. To equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commiſſion of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a leſs. If only murder were puniſhed with death, very few robbers would ſtain their hands in blood; but when, by the laſt act of cruelty no new danger is incurred, and greater ſecurity may be obtained, upon what principle ſhall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the ſentence is often mitigated to ſimple robbery; but ſurely this is to confeſs that our laws are unreaſonable in our own

opinion;

opinion; and, indeed, it may be obſerved, that all but murderers have, at their laſt hour, the common ſenſations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the puniſhment to the offence, proceeds the frequent ſolicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet ſhocked at the thought of deſtroying him. His crime ſhrinks to nothing, compared with his miſery; and ſeverity defeats itſelf by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly diſables thoſe who die upon it from infeſting the community; but their death ſeems not to contribute more to the reformation of their aſſociates, than any other method of ſeparation. A thief ſeldom paſſes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery haſtens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave cloſes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital puniſhments, therefore, rarely hinders the commiſſion of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reaſon to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by caſuiſts or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart is equally criminal, will ſcarcely believe that two malefactors ſo different in guilt can be juſtly doomed to the ſame puniſhment: nor is the neceſſity of ſubmitting the conſcience to human laws ſo plainly evinced, ſo clearly ſtated, or ſo generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender,

and the juſt, will always ſcruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that ſtate in which there is no repentance, has converſed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compaſſion may incur from thoſe who confound cruelty with firmneſs, I know not whether any wiſe man would wiſh it leſs powerful, or leſs extenſive.

If thoſe whom the wiſdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper diſcipline and uſeful labour, have been diſentangled from their habits, they might have eſcaped all the temptations to ſubſequent crimes, and paſſed their days in reparation and penitence; and detected they might all have been, had the proſecutors been certain that their lives would have been ſpared. I believe, every thief will confeſs, that he has been more than once ſeized and diſmiſſed; and that he has ſometimes ventured upon capital crimes, becauſe he knew, that thoſe whom he injured would rather connive at his eſcape, than cloud their minds with the horrors of his death.

All laws againſt wickedneſs are ineffectual, unleſs ſome will inform, and ſome will proſecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and proſecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of puniſhing a

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ſlight injury with death; eſpecially when he remembers, that the thief might have procured ſafety by another crime, from which he was reſtrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to aſſiſt the exerciſe of publick juſtice are indeed ſtrong; but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderneſs for life. What is puniſhed with ſeverity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be ſeldom diſcovered; and multitudes will be ſuffered to advance from crime to crime, till they deſerve death, becauſe, if they had been ſooner proſecuted, they would have ſuffered death before they deſerved it.

This ſcheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedneſs by lenity, is ſo remote from common practice, that I might reaſonably fear to expoſe it to the publick, could it be ſupported only by my own obſervations: I ſhall, therefore, by aſcribing it to its author, Sir *Thomas More*, endeavour to procure it that attention, which I wiſh always paid to prudence, to juſtice, and to mercy.

NUMB. 115. TUESDAY, *April* 23, 1751.

Quædam parva quidem, ſed non toleranda maritis. JUV.

Some faults, tho' ſmall, intolerable grow. DRYDEN.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I SIT down, in purſuance of my late engagement, to recount the remaining part of the adventures that befel me in my long queſt of conjugal felicity, which, though I have not yet been ſo happy as to obtain it, I have at leaſt endeavoured to deſerve by unwearied diligence, without ſuffering from repeated diſappointments any abatement of my hope, or repreſſion of my activity.

You muſt have obſerved in the world a ſpecies of mortals who employ themſelves in promoting matrimony, and, without any viſible motive of intereſt or vanity, without any diſcoverable impulſe of malice or benevolence, without any reaſon, but that they want objects of attention and topicks of converſation, are inceſſantly buſy in procuring wives and huſbands. They fill the ears of every ſingle man and woman with ſome convenient match, and when they are informed of your age and fortune, offer a partner of life with the ſame readineſs, and the ſame indifference, as a ſaleſman, when he has taken meaſure by his eye, fits his cuſtomer with a coat.

It might be expected that they ſhould ſoon be diſcouraged from this officious interpoſition by reſent-

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ment or contempt; and that every man ſhould determine the choice on which ſo much of his happineſs muſt depend, by his own judgment and obſervation: yet it happens, that as theſe propoſals are generally made with a ſhew of kindneſs, they ſeldom provoke anger, but are at worſt heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are ſure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect; and in more powerful and active underſtandings they excite curioſity, and ſometimes, by a lucky chance, bring perſons of ſimilar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I was known to poſſeſs a fortune, and to want a wife; and therefore was frequently attended by theſe hymeneal ſolicitors, with whoſe importunity I was ſometimes diverted, and ſometimes perplexed; for they contended for me as vultures for a carcaſe; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own ſcheme, from the ſucceſs of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleaſure of defeating others equally eager, and equally induſtrious.

An invitation to ſup with one of thoſe buſy friends, made me by a concerted chance acquainted with *Camilla*, by whom it was expected, that I ſhould be ſuddenly and irreſiſtibly enſlaved. The lady, whom the ſame kindneſs had brought without her own concurrence into the liſts of love, ſeemed to think me at leaſt worthy of the honour of captivity; and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with ſo much art and ſpirit, that though I had been too often deceived by appearances to devote myſelf irrevocably

at the firſt interview, yet I could not ſuppreſs ſome raptures of admiration, and flutters of deſire. I was eaſily perſuaded to make nearer approaches; but ſoon diſcovered, that an union with *Camilla* was not much to be wiſhed. *Camilla* profeſſed a boundleſs contempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence of her own ſex; and very frequently expreſſed her wonder that men of learning or experience could ſubmit to trifle away life with beings incapable of ſolid thought. In mixed companies, ſhe always aſſociated with the men, and declared her ſatisfaction when the ladies retired. If any ſhort excurſion into the country was propoſed, ſhe commonly inſiſted upon the excluſion of women from the party; becauſe, where they were admitted, the time was waſted in frothy compliments, weak indulgences, and idle ceremonies. To ſhew the greatneſs of her mind, ſhe avoided all compliance with the faſhion; and to boaſt the profundity of her knowledge, miſtook the various textures of ſilk, confounded tabbies with damaſks, and ſent for ribbands by wrong names. She deſpiſed the commerce of ſtated viſits, a farce of empty form without inſtruction; and congratulated herſelf, that ſhe never learned to write meſſage cards. She often applauded the noble ſentiment of *Plato*, who rejoiced that he was born a man rather than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of *Swift*'s opinion, that women are only a higher ſpecies of monkies; and confeſſed, that when ſhe conſidered the behaviour, or heard the converſation, of her ſex, ſhe could not but forgive the *Turks* for ſuſpecting them to want ſouls.

It was the joy and pride of *Camilla* to have provoked, by this inſolence, all the rage of hatred, and

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all the perſecutions of calumny; nor was ſhe ever more elevated with her own ſuperiority, than when ſhe talked of female anger, and female cunning. Well, ſays ſhe, has nature provided that ſuch virulence ſhould be diſabled by folly, and ſuch cruelty be reſtrained by impotence.

Camilla doubtleſs expected, that what ſhe loſt on one ſide, ſhe ſhould gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made ſuch generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, inſtead of ſpringing forward to meet her, ſhrunk back at her approach. She was perſecuted by the ladies as a deſerter, and at beſt received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amuſed myſelf a while with her fopperies, but novelty ſoon gave way to deteſtation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the ruggedneſs of a man without his force, and the ignorance of a woman without her ſoftneſs; nor could I think my quiet and honour to be entruſted to ſuch audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and ſoliciting aſſault.

My next miſtreſs was *Nitella*, a lady of gentle mien, and ſoft voice, always ſpeaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from thoſe with whom chance had brought her into company. In *Nitella* I promiſed myſelf an eaſy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without diſturbance or altercation. I therefore ſoon reſolved to addreſs her, but was diſcouraged from proſecuting my courtſhip, by obſerving, that her apartments were ſuperſtitiouſly regular; and that, unleſs ſhe had notice of my viſit,

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ſhe was never to be ſeen. There is a kind of anxious cleanlineſs which I have always noted as the characteriſtick of a ſlattern; it is the ſuperfluous ſcrupuloſity of guilt, dreading diſcovery, and ſhunning ſuſpicion: it is the violence of an effort againſt habit, which being impelled by external motives, cannot ſtop at the middle point.

Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than elegance; and ſeldom could forbear to diſcover, by her uneaſineſs and conſtraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engroſſed: I therefore concluded, that being only occaſionally and ambitiouſly dreſſed, ſhe was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are ſo many competitors for the fame of cleanlineſs, that it is not hard to gain information of thoſe that fail, from thoſe that deſire to excel: I quickly found, that *Nitella* paſſed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, nightcap, and ſlippers, when ſhe was not decorated for immediate ſhew.

I was then led by my evil deſtiny to *Charybdis*, who never neglected an opportunity of ſeizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myſelf quickly made happy by permiſſion to attend her to publick places; and pleaſed my own vanity with imagining the envy which I ſhould raiſe in a thouſand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of *Charybdis*. She ſoon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom which ſhe had never ſeen. I ſolicited the happineſs of accompanying her, which, after a ſhort reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curioſity in her journey, than after all poſſible means of

expence;

expence; and was every moment taking occaſion to mention ſome delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon ſuch notices to procure.

After our return, being now more familiar, ſhe told me, whenever we met, of ſome new diverſion; at night ſhe had notice of a charming company that would breakfaſt in the gardens; and in the morning had been informed of ſome new ſong in the opera, ſome new dreſs at the playhouſe, or ſome performer at a concert whom ſhe longed to hear. Her intelligence was ſuch, that there never was a ſhew, to which ſhe did not ſummon me on the ſecond day; and as ſhe hated a crowd, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at ſome intermediate hour, and pay the price of a whole company. When we paſſed the ſtreets, ſhe was often charmed with ſome trinket in the toyſhops; and from moderate deſires of ſeals and ſnuff-boxes, roſe, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the ſmile of *Charybdis* too coſtly for a private purſe, and added one more to ſix and forty lovers, whoſe fortune and patience her rapacity had exhauſted.

Imperia then took poſſeſſion of my affections; but kept them only for a ſhort time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and having ſpent the early part of her life in the peruſal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of *Cleopatra*; expected nothing leſs than vows, altars, and ſacrifices; and thought her charms diſhonoured, and her power infringed, by the ſofteſt oppoſition to her ſentiments, or the ſmalleſt tranſgreſſion of her commands. Time might indeed cure this ſpecies of pride in a mind not naturally undiſcerning, and vi-

tiated

tiated only by falſe repreſentations; but the operations of time are ſlow; and I therefore left her to grow wiſe at leiſure, or to continue in error at her own expence.

Thus I have hitherto, in ſpite of myſelf, paſſed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dreſs up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the ſame excellence in corporeal beauty. But ſurely, Mr. RAMBLER, it is not madneſs to hope for ſome terreſtrial lady unſtained with the ſpots which I have been deſcribing; at leaſt I am reſolved to purſue my ſearch; for I am ſo far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the higheſt happineſs decreed to our preſent ſtate; and if after all theſe miſcarriages I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you ſhall hear once more from,

Yours, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

NUMB. 116. SATURDAY, *April* 27, 1751.

Optat ephippia bos; piger optat arare caballus. HOR.

Thus the flow ox wou'd gaudy trappings claim;
The sprightly horse wou'd plough —— FRANCIS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I WAS the second son of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of *London*. My father having by his marriage freed the estate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his sisters their portions, thought himself discharged from all obligation to further thought, and entitled to spend the rest of his life in rural pleasures. He therefore spared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity; he procured the best guns and horses that the kingdom could supply, paid large salaries to his groom and huntsman, and became the envy of the country for the discipline of his hounds. But above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers and setting-dogs, which by long and vigilant cultivation he had so much improved, that not a partridge or heathcock could rest in security, and game of whatever species that dared to light upon his manor, was beaten down by his shot, or covered with his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated in the chace, and at an age when other boys are *creeping like snails unwillingly to school*, he could wind the horn, beat

beat the bufhes, bound over hedges, and fwim rivers. When the huntfman one day broke his leg, he fupplied his place with equal abilities, and came home with the fcut in his hat, amidft the acclamations of the whole village. I being either delicate or timorous, lefs defirous of honour, or lefs capable of fylvan heroifm, was always the favourite of my mother; becaufe I kept my coat clean, and my complexion free from freckles, and did not come home like my brother mired and tanned, nor carry corn in my hat to the horfe, nor bring dirty curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amufe herfelf with books, and being much inclined to defpife the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, difdained to learn their fentiments or converfation, and had made no addition to the notions which fhe had brought from the precincts of *Cornhill*. She was, therefore, always recounting the glories of the city; enumerating the fucceffion of mayors; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at *Guildhall*; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies feafts by men of whom fome are now made aldermen, fome have fined for fheriffs, and none are worth lefs than forty thoufand pounds. She frequently difplayed her father's greatnefs; told of the large bills which he had paid at fight; of the fums for which his word would pafs upon the Exchange; the heaps of gold which he ufed on *Saturday* night to tofs about with a fhovel; the extent of his warehoufe, and the ftrength of his doors; and when fhe relaxed her imagination with lower fubjects, defcribed the furniture of their country-houfe, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By these narratives I was fired with the ſplendor and dignity of *London*, and of trade. I therefore devoted myſelf to a ſhop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with enquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholeſale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother aſſured me that many had arrived who began the world with leſs than myſelf.

I was very impatient to enter into a path, which led to ſuch honour and felicity; but was forced for a time to endure ſome repreſſion of my eagerneſs, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that *a young man ſeldom makes much money, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty*. They thought it neceſſary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that of learning merchants accounts, and the art of regulating books; but at length the tedious days elapſed, I was tranſplanted to town, and, with great ſatisfaction to myſelf, bound to a haberdaſher.

My maſter, who had no conception of any virtue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally ariſe from a cloſe and unwearied attention to the main chance; his deſire to gain wealth was ſo well tempered by the vanity of ſhewing it, that without any other principle of action, he lived in the eſteem of the whole commercial world; and was always treated with reſpect by the only men, whoſe good opinion he valued or ſolicited, thoſe who were univerſally allowed to be richer than himſelf.

By his inſtructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and ſoon caught from my fellow-apprentices the true grace of a counter bow, the careleſs air with which a ſmall pair of ſcales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and ſprightlineſs with which the box, after the ribband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no deſire of any higher employment, and therefore applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly maſter of all that could be known, became a critick in ſmall wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was ſometimes conſulted by the weavers when they projected faſhions for the enſuing ſpring.

With all theſe accompliſhments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeſhip, I paid a viſit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and conſulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a maſter of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But unhappily, at the firſt publick table to which I was invited, appeared a ſtudent of the Temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a ſmile of contempt, which deſtroyed at once all my hopes of diſtinction, ſo that I durſt hardly raiſe my eyes for fear of encountering their ſuperiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of diſplaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with hiſtorical narratives

tives and political obſervations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of aſſemblies, gardens, and diverſions. I, indeed, eſſayed to fill up a pauſe in a parliamenrary debate with a faint mention of trade and *Spaniards*; and once attempted, with ſome warmth, to correct a groſs miſtake about a ſilver breaſt-knot; but neither of my antagoniſts ſeemed to think a reply neceſſary; they reſumed their diſcourſe without emotion, and again engroſſed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear deſirous to know my opinion of her dreſs, or to hear how long the carnation ſhot with white, that was then new amongſt them, had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of theſe gentlemen had more money than myſelf, I could not diſcover what had depreſſed me in their preſence; nor why they were conſidered by others as more worthy of attention and reſpect; and therefore reſolved, when we met again, to rouſe my ſpirit, and force myſelf into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a ſmall circle very ſucceſsfully with a minute repreſentation of my lord Mayor's ſhow, when the colonel entered careleſs and gay, ſat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not indeed with the ſame attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language; and by one or other the company was ſo

happily amufed, that I was neither heard nor feen, nor was able to give any other proof of my exiftence than that I put round the glafs, and was in my turn permitted to name the toaft.

My mother indeed endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps thefe fhowy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket needs not care what any man fays of him; that, if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and foldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purfe; and that it is fine, when a man can fet his hands to his fides, and fay he is worth forty thoufand pounds every day of the year. Thefe and many more fuch confolations and encouragements, I received from my good mother, which however did not much allay my uneafinefs; for having by fome accident heard, that the country ladies defpifed her as a cit, I had therefore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but confidered her as one whofe ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a ftate of meannefs and ignominy, from which I could not find any poffibility of rifing to the rank which my anceftors had always held.

I returned, however, to my mafter, and bufied myfelf among thread, and filks, and laces, but without my former cheerfulnefs and alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact difpofition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the gloffy blacknefs of my fhoes; nor heard with my former elevation thofe compliments which ladies fometimes condefcended to pay me upon my readinefs in twifting a paper, or counting

out

out the change. The term of *Young man*, with which I was ſometimes honoured, as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent of my perſon, and ſullen in my temper, often miſtook the demands of the cuſtomers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and diſmiſſed them with ſurly ſilence.

My maſter was afraid leſt the ſhop ſhould ſuffer by this change of my behaviour; and, therefore, after ſome expoſtulations, poſted me in the warehouſe, and preſerved me from the danger and reproach of deſertion, to which my diſcontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the ſixth year of my ſervitude my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I was now heir, and with the hearty conſent of my maſter commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me ſhall be communicated in another letter, by, Sir,

Yours, *&c.*

MISOCAPELUS.

Numb. 117. Tuesday, *April* 30, 1751.

Ὄσσαν ἐπ' Οὐλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὄσσῃ
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη. Hom.

The gods they challenge, and affect the ſkies:
Heav'd on *Olympus* tott'ring *Oſſa* ſtood;
On *Oſſa*, *Pelion* nods with all his wood. Pope.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the diſpoſition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All induſtry muſt be excited by hope; and as the ſtudent often propoſes no other reward to himſelf than praiſe, he is eaſily diſcouraged by contempt and inſult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluſe ſpeculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accuſtomed his paſſions to the viciſſitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed converſation, will bluſh at the ſtare of petulant incredulity, and ſuffer himſelf to be driven by a burſt of laughter, from the fortreſſes of demonſtration. The mechaniſt will be afraid to aſſert before hardy contradiction, the poſſibility of tearing down bulwarks with a ſilk-worm's thread; and the aſtronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the diſtance of the fixed ſtars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have ſhaken off this cowardice, I had not ſheltered myſelf under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the publick the theory of a garret; a ſubject which, except ſome ſlight and tranſient ſtrictures, has been hitherto neglected by thoſe who were beſt qualified to adorn it, either for want of leiſure to proſecute the various reſearches in which a nice diſcuſſion muſt engage them, or becauſe it requires ſuch diverſity of knowledge, and ſuch extent of curioſity, as is ſcarcely to be found in any ſingle intellect: or perhaps others foreſaw the tumults which would be raiſed againſt them, and confined their knowledge to their own breaſts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the profeſſors of literature generally reſide in the higheſt ſtories, has been immemorially obſerved. The wiſdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated ſituation: why elſe were the *Muſes* ſtationed on *Olympus* or *Parnaſſus* by thoſe who could with equal right have raiſed them bowers in the vale of *Tempe* or erected their altars among the flexures of *Meander?* Why was *Jove* himſelf nurſed upon a mountain? or why did the goddeſſes, when the prize of beauty was conteſted, try the cauſe upon the top of *Ida?* Such were the fictions by which the great maſters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to poſterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obſcured by the negligence and ignorance of ſucceeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated ſymbol of *Pythagoras*, ἀνεμῶν πνεόντων τὴν ἠχὼ προσκύνει; "when the wind blows, worſhip its echo."

 This

This could not but be underſtood by his diſciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently viſited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of *Auguſtus*, for *Tibullus* evidently congratulates himſelf upon his garret, not without ſome alluſion to the *Pythagorean* precept.

Quàm juvat immites ventos audire cubantem——
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cùm fuderit auſter,
Securum ſomnos, imbre juvante, ſequi!

How ſweet in ſleep to paſs the careleſs hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and daſhing ſhow'rs!

And it is impoſſible not to diſcover the fondneſs of *Lucretius*, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his deſcription of the lofty towers of ſerene learning, and of the pleaſure with which a wiſe man looks down upon the confuſed and erratick ſtate of the world moving below him.

Sed nil dulcius eſt, bene quàm munita tenere
Editâ doctrinâ ſapientum templa ſerena;
Deſpicere unde queas alios, paſſimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ.

——'Tis ſweet thy lab'ring ſteps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wiſdom well ſupply'd,
And all the magazines of learning fortify'd:
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind. DRYDEN.

The inſtitution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is ſtill the uſual receptacle of the philoſopher and poet; but this, like many ancient cuſtoms,

customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established.

Causa latet; res est notissima.

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known. ADDISON.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious enquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by the wits, as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aerial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some yet more visionary, tell us that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniencies may perhaps all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they cannot be

ſuppoſed ſufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, diſtant ages, and ſeparate nations. Of an univerſal practice, there muſt ſtill be preſumed an univerſal cauſe, which, however recondite and abſtruſe, may be perhaps reſerved to make me illuſtrious by its diſcovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is univerſally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the ſtate of the body, and that the body is in a great meaſure regulated by the various compreſſions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of *Hippocrates*; but no man has yet ſufficiently conſidered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords inſtances of local underſtanding, of wits and reaſoners, whoſe faculties are adapted to ſome ſingle ſpot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, ſink at once into ſilence and ſtupidity. I have diſcovered, by a long ſeries of obſervations, that invention and elocution ſuffer great impediments from denſe and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper diſtance from the ſurface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and ſets at liberty thoſe intellectual powers which were before ſhackled by too ſtrong attraction, and unable to expand themſelves under the preſſure of a groſs atmoſphere. I have found dulneſs to quicken into ſentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhauſted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon riſing ground, as the flaccid ſides of a

football

football would have ſwelled out into ſtiffneſs and extenſion.

For this reaſon I never think myſelf qualified to judge deciſively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take ſome opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condenſation, tenſion and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor ſerious below, I then conſider him as hopeleſs; but as it ſeldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, firſt marking the point moſt favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long ſtudied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatiſe of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cauſe of the gaiety and ſprightlineſs of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increaſe of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the ſpirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horſe; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth ſtory, is whirled through more ſpace by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropicks are known to be fiery, inconſtant, inventive, and fanciful; becauſe, living at the utmoſt length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more ſwiftneſs than thoſe whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and therefore, as it becomes a wiſe man to

ſtruggle with the inconveniencies of his country, whenever celerity and acuteneſs are requiſite, we muſt actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the center in a garret.

If you imagine that I aſcribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I deſire you to conſult your own memory, and conſider whether you have ever known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the firſt floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of underſtanding till he was reſtored to his original ſituation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from ſuppoſing; I know there are ſome who would continue blockheads even on the ſummit of the *Andes*, or on the peak of *Teneriffe*. But let not any man be conſidered as unimproveable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of *Aretæus* was rational in no other place but his own ſhop.

I think a frequent removal to various diſtances from the center, ſo neceſſary to a juſt eſtimate of intellectual abilities, and conſequently of ſo great uſe in education, that if I hoped that the publick could be perſuaded to ſo expenſive an experiment, I would propoſe, that there ſhould be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like thoſe which *Bacon* deſcribes in *Solomon*'s houſe, for the expanſion and concentration of underſtanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or conſtitutions. Perhaps ſome that fume away in meditations upon time and ſpace in the tower, might compoſe tables of intereſt at a

certain

certain depth; and he that upon level ground ſtagnates in ſilence, or creeps in narrative, might, at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, ſparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addiſon obſerves, that we may find the heat of *Virgil*'s climate, in ſome lines of his *Georgick:* ſo, when I read a compoſition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly ſaid to ſmell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a ſprightly ſally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it freſh from the garret; an expreſſion which would break from me upon the peruſal of moſt of your papers, did I not believe, that you ſometimes quit the garret, and aſcend into the cock-loft.

HYPERTATUS.

NUMB. 118. SATURDAY, *May* 4, 1751.

—— Omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte. HOR.

In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown. FRANCIS.

CICERO has, with his usual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted, in his relation of the dream of *Scipio*, to depreciate those honours for which he himself appears to have panted with restless solicitude, by shewing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope from men is circumscribed.

"You see," says *Africanus*, pointing at the earth from the celestial regions, "that the globe assigned "to the residence and habitation of human beings "is of small dimensions: how then can you obtain from the praise of men, any glory worthy of "a wish? Of this little world the inhabited parts "are neither numerous nor wide; even the spots "where men are to be found are broken by intervening deserts; and the nations are so separated "as that nothing can be transmitted from one to "another. With the people of the south, by whom "the opposite part of the earth is possessed, you have "no intercourse; and by how small a tract do "you communicate with the countries of the "north? The territory which you inhabit is no more "than a scanty island inclosed by a small body of "water,

"water, to which you give the name of the great ſea "and the *Atlantick* ocean. And even in this known "and frequented continent, what hope can you entertain, that your renown will paſs the ſtream of "*Ganges*, or the cliffs of *Caucaſus?* or by whom will "your name be uttered in the extremities of the "north or ſouth, towards the riſing or the ſetting "ſun? So narrow is the ſpace to which your fame "can be propagated, and even there how long will "it remain?"

He then proceeds to aſſign natural cauſes why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but ſhort in its duration; he obſerves the difference between the computation of time in earth and heaven, and declares, that according to the celeſtial chronology, no human honours can laſt a ſingle year.

Such are the objections by which *Tully* has made a ſhew of diſcouraging the purſuit of fame; objections which ſufficiently diſcover his tenderneſs and regard for his darling phantom. *Homer*, when the plan of his poem made the death of *Patroclus* neceſſary, reſolved, at leaſt, that he ſhould die with honour; and therefore brought down againſt him the patron god of *Troy*, and left to *Hector* only the mean taſk of giving the laſt blow to an enemy whom a divine hand had diſabled from reſiſtance. Thus *Tully* ennobles fame, which he profeſſes to degrade, by oppoſing it to celeſtial happineſs; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by repreſenting it ſmall in the eſtimation of ſuperior beings. He ſtill admits it the higheſt and nobleſt of terreſtrial objects, and alleges little more againſt it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What

What might be the effect of theſe obſervations conveyed in *Ciceronian* eloquence to *Roman* underſtandings, cannot be determined; but few of thoſe who ſhall in the preſent age read my humble verſion will find themſelves much depreſſed in their hopes, or retarded in their deſigns; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us paſs their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or acquiſition of power, have very anxiouſly enquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the *Ganges*, or invigorated any effort by the deſire of ſpreading their renown among the clans of *Caucaſus*. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compaſs; a ſingle nation, and a few years, have generally ſufficient amplitude to fill our imaginations.

A little conſideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happineſs in the frequent repetition of his name, may ſpend his life in propagating it, without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or neceſſity of paſſing the *Atlantick* ſea.

The numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greateſt power, or moſt active diligence, are inconſiderable; and where neither benefit nor miſchief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curioſity; a paſſion, which, though in ſome degree univerſally aſſociated to reaſon, is eaſily confined, overborn, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower claſſes of mankind, there will be found very little deſire of any other knowledge, than what may contribute immediately to the relief of ſome preſſing uneaſineſs, or the attainment of

ſome

ſome near advantage. The *Turks* are ſaid to hear with wonder a propoſal to walk out only that they may walk back; and enquire why any man ſhould labour for nothing: ſo thoſe whoſe condition has always reſtrained them to the contemplation of their own neceſſities, and who have been accuſtomed to look forward only to a ſmall diſtance, will ſcarcely underſtand, why nights and days ſhould be ſpent in ſtudies, which end in new ſtudies, and which, according to *Malherbe*'s obſervation, do not tend to leſſen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer eaſily be perſuaded, that much pleaſure can ariſe from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in diſtant times; or that any thing can deſerve their enquiry, of which κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν, οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any conſequences.

The truth is, that very few have leiſure from indiſpenſable buſineſs, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among thoſe to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themſelves engagements, by the indulgence of ſome petty ambition, the admiſſion of ſome inſatiable deſire, or the toleration of ſome predominant paſſion. The man whoſe whole wiſh is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect intereſt, to eſtimate ſecurities, and to engage for mortgages: the lover diſdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of *Corinna*; and the courtier thinks the hour loſt, which is not ſpent in promoting his intereſt, and facilitating his advancement. The adventures of valour, and the diſcoveries of ſcience, will find a cold reception, when they

are obtruded upon an attention thus busy with its favourite amusement, and impatient of interruption or disturbance.

But not only such employments as seduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promises of happiness, may restrain the mind from excursion and enquiry; curiosity may be equally destroyed by less formidable enemies; it may be dissipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The sportsman and the man of dress have their heads filled with a fox or a horse-race, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beside, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or solicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and some yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleasure or business, without joy or sorrow, nor ever rouse from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of those who have dedicated themselves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curiosity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame, but that which their own studies entitle them to partake. The naturalist has no desire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer as a being unworthy of his regard: the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiasts, all those who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the vallies of life

no voice but that of neceſſity; all thoſe who imagine themſelves too important to regard him, and conſider the mention of his name as an uſurpation of their time; all who are too much, or too little pleaſed with themſelves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleaſure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different purſuits; and all who ſlumber in univerſal negligence; he will find his renown ſtraitened by nearer bounds than the rocks of *Caucaſus*, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a ſmall part of his fellow-creatures.

That we may not languiſh in our endeavours after excellence, it is neceſſary, that, as *Africanus* counſels his deſcendant, "we raiſe our eyes to higher pro-"ſpects, and contemplate our future and eternal "ſtate, without giving up our hearts to the praiſe "of crowds, or fixing our hopes on ſuch rewards as "human power can beſtow."

NUMB. 119. TUESDAY, *May* 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra. HOR.

Faults lay on either ſide the *Trojan* tow'rs. ELPHINSTON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AS, notwithſtanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence, will be able to ſuggeſt, men and women muſt at laſt paſs their lives together, I have never therefore thought thoſe writers friends to human happineſs, who endeavour to excite in either ſex a general contempt or ſuſpicion of the other. To perſuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a ſuitable aſſociate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous; that they who truſt are certainly betrayed, and they who eſteem are always diſappointed; is not to awaken judgment, but to inflame temerity. Without hope there can be no caution. Thoſe who are convinced, that no reaſon for preference can be found, will never haraſs their thoughts with doubt and deliberation; they will reſolve, ſince they are doomed to miſery, that no needleſs anxiety ſhall diſturb their quiet; they will plunge at hazard into the crowd, and ſnatch the firſt hand that ſhall be held toward them.

That the world is overrun with vice, cannot be denied; but vice, however predominant, has not

yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally eſcape a greater evil by ſuffering a leſs; and therefore, thoſe who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the knowledge of life, ſhould be careful to inculcate the poſſibility of virtue and happineſs, and to encourage endeavours by proſpects of ſucceſs.

You, perhaps, do not ſuſpect, that theſe are the ſentiments of one who has been ſubject for many years to all the hardſhips of antiquated virginity; has been long accuſtomed to the coldneſs of neglect, and the petulance of inſult; has been mortified in full aſſemblies by enquiries after forgotten faſhions, games long diſuſed, and wits and beauties of ancient renown; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the ſecond wedding of many acquaintances; has been ridiculed by two generations of coquets in whiſpers intended to be heard; and been long conſidered by the airy and gay, as too venerable for familiarity, and too wiſe for pleaſure. It is indeed natural for injury to provoke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual aſperity; yet I have hitherto ſtruggled with ſo much vigilance againſt my pride, and my reſentment, that I have preſerved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any part of my employment to collect ſentences againſt marriage; nor am inclined to leſſen the number of the few friends whom time has left me, by obſtructing that happineſs which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in cenſures of the forwardneſs and indiſcretion of girls, or the inconſtancy, taſteleſſneſs, and perfidy of men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition to which we are not condemned by neceſſity, but induced by obſervation and choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the malignity with which a reproach, edged with the appellation of old maid, ſwells ſome of thoſe hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to ſolitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor paſſed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtſhip, and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gaiety amidſt the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applauſe; been attended from pleaſure to pleaſure by the great, the ſprightly, and the vain; and ſeen my regard ſolicited by the obſequiouſneſs of gallantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a ſtranger to nuptial happineſs, I ſuffer only the conſequences of my own reſolves, and can look back upon the ſucceſſion of lovers, whoſe addreſſes I have rejected, without grief and without malice.

When my name firſt began to be inſcribed upon glaſſes, I was honoured with the amorous profeſſions of the gay *Venuſtulus*, a gentleman, who, being the only ſon of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonneſs of expence, and ſoftneſs of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his perſon, and eaſy in his addreſs, and, therefore, ſoon gained upon my eye at an age when the ſight is very little over-ruled by the underſtanding. He had not any power in himſelf of gladdening or amuſing; but ſupplied his want of converſation by treats and diverſions; and his chief

art of courtſhip was to fill the mind of his miſtreſs with parties, rambles, muſick, and ſhews. We were often engaged in ſhort excurſions to gardens and ſeats, and I was for a while pleaſed with the care which *Venuſtulus* diſcovered in ſecuring me from any appearance of danger, or poſſibility of miſchance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promiſe the waterman a reward if he landed us ſafe; and always contrived to return by day-light for fear of robbers. This extraordinary ſolicitude was repreſented for a time as the effect of his tenderneſs for me; but fear is too ſtrong for continued hypocriſy. I ſoon diſcovered, that *Venuſtulus* had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrors, and he could ſcarcely refrain from ſcreams and outcries at any accidental ſurpriſe. He durſt not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainſcot, nor croſs a field where the cattle were friſking in the ſunſhine; the leaſt breeze that waved upon the river was a ſtorm, and every clamour in the ſtreet was a cry of fire. I have ſeen him loſe his colour when my ſquirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the ſudden entrance of a black cat. Compaſſion once obliged me to drive away with my fan, a beetle that kept him in diſtreſs, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own eſcape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a huſband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refuſing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unneceſſary fears, and flown to

me for that ſuccour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was *Fungoſa*, the ſon of a ſtock-jobber, whoſe viſits my friends, by the importunity of perſuaſion, prevailed upon me to allow. *Fungoſa* was no very ſuitable companion; for having been bred in a counting-houſe, he ſpoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no deſire of any reputation, but that of an acute prognoſticator of the changes in the funds; nor had any means of raiſing merriment, but by telling how ſomebody was overreached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great ſobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haſte to conclude the match, but was ſo much awed by my parents, that I durſt not diſmiſs him, and might perhaps have been doomed for ever to the groſſneſs of pedlary, and the jargon of uſury, had not a fraud been diſcovered in the ſettlement, which ſet me free from the perſecution of groveling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

I was afterwards ſix months without any particular notice, but at laſt became the idol of the glittering *Floſculus*, who preſcribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied at pleaſure the cock of every hat, and the ſleeve of every coat that appeared in faſhionable aſſemblies. *Floſculus* made ſome impreſſion upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion; he commended my ſkill in dreſs, my judgment in ſuiting colours, and my art in diſpoſing ornaments. But *Floſculus* was too much engaged by his own elegance, to be ſufficiently attentive to the duties of a lover,

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or to pleaſe with varied praiſe an ear made delicate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and ſtaid away three days, becauſe I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found, that *Floſculus* was rather a rival than an admirer; and that we ſhould probably live in a perpetual ſtruggle of emulous finery, and ſpend our lives in ſtratagems to be firſt in the faſhion.

I had ſoon after the honour at a feaſt of attracting the eyes of *Dentatus*, one of thoſe human beings whoſe only happineſs is to dine. *Dentatus* regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of meaſures that he had laid for procuring the beſt cook in *France*, and entertained me with bills of fare, preſcribed the arrangement of diſhes, and taught me two ſauces invented by himſelf. At length, ſuch is the uncertainty of human happineſs, I declared my opinion too haſtily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew ſo cold and negligent, that he was eaſily diſmiſſed.

Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the honour to lead a while in triumph. But two of them I drove from me, by diſcovering that they had no taſte or knowledge in muſick; three I diſmiſſed, becauſe they were drunkards; two, becauſe they paid their addreſſes at the ſame time to other ladies; and ſix, becauſe they attempted to influence my choice, by bribing my maid. Two more I diſcarded at the ſecond viſit, for obſcene alluſions; and five for drollery on religion. In the latter part of my reign, I ſentenced two to perpetual exile, for offering me ſettlements, by which the children of a former marriage would have been injured; four, for

reprefenting falfely the value of their eftates; three for concealing their debts; and one, for raifing the rent of a decrepit tenant.

I have now fent you a narrative, which the ladies may oppofe to the tale of *Hymenæus*. I mean not to depreciate the fex which has produced poets and philofophers, heroes and martyrs; but will not fuffer the rifing generation of beauties to be dejected by partial fatire; or to imagine, that thofe who cenfured them have not likewife their follies, and their vices. I do not yet believe happinefs unattainable in marriage, though I have never yet been able to find a man, with whom I could prudently venture an infeparable union. It is neceffary to expofe faults, that their deformity may be feen; but the reproach ought not to be extended beyond the crime, nor either fex to be condemned, becaufe fome women, or men, are indelicate or difhoneft.

I am, *&c.*

TRANQUILLA.

NUMB. 120. SATURDAY, *May* 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri solio Phraaten,
Dissidens plebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus, populemque falsis
Dedocet uti
Vocibus. HOR.

True virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue to crowds a foe profest,
Disdains to number with the blest
Phraates, by his slaves ador'd,
And to the *Parthian* crown restor'd. FRANCIS.

IN the reign of *Jenghiz Can*, conqueror of the east, in the city of *Samarcand*, lived *Nouradin* the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of *India* for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages; the sea was covered with his ships; the streams of *Oxus* were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to *Nouradin*.

At length *Nouradin* felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages

ſages of phyſick; they filled his apartments with alexipharmicks, reſtoratives, and eſſential virtues; the pearls of the ocean were diſſolved, the ſpices of *Arabia* were diſtilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new ſpirits to his nerves, and new balſam to his blood. *Nouradin* was for ſome time amuſed with promiſes, invigorated with cordials, or ſoothed with anodynes; but the diſeaſe preyed upon his vitals, and he ſoon diſcovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deſerted by his phyſicians, and rarely viſited by his friends; but his unwillingneſs to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having paſſed the night in tedious languor, he called to him *Almamoulin*, his only ſon; and diſmiſſing his attendants, "My ſon," ſays he, "behold here the weakneſs and fragility of man; "look backward a few days, thy father was great "and happy, freſh as the vernal roſe, and ſtrong as "the cedar of the mountain; the nations of *Aſia* "drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted "in his ſhade. Malevolence beheld me, and ſighed: "His root, ſhe cried, is fixed in the depths; it is "watered by the fountains of *Oxus*; it ſends out "branches afar, and bids defiance to the blaſt; pru-"dence reclines againſt his trunk, and proſperity "dances on his top. Now, *Almamoulin*, look upon "me withering and proſtrate; look upon me and "attend. I have trafficked, I have proſpered, I "have rioted in gain; my houſe is ſplendid, my "ſervants are numerous; yet I diſplayed only a "ſmall part of my riches; the reſt, which I was hin-

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" dered from enjoying by the fear of raiſing envy, or " tempting rapacity, I have piled in towers, I have " buried in caverns, I have hidden in ſecret repoſi- " tories, which this ſcroll will diſcover. My pur- " poſe was, after ten months more ſpent in com- " merce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a ſafer " country; to have given ſeven years to delight and " feſtivity, and the remaining part of my days to " ſolitude and repentance; but the hand of death " is upon me; a frigorifick torpor encroaches upon " my veins; I am now leaving the produce of my " toil, which it muſt be thy buſineſs to enjoy with " wiſdom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled *Nouradin* with ſuch grief, that he fell into convulſions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched a while with honeſt ſorrow, and ſat two hours in profound meditation, without peruſing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborn with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new poſſeſſions, which ſwelled his heart with ſuch tranſports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now ſufficiently compoſed to order a funeral of modeſt magnificence, ſuitable at once to the rank of *Nouradin*'s profeſſion, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he ſpent in viſiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treaſures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expences of other young men: he therefore believed, that happineſs was now in his power,

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ſince he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accuſtomed to regret the want. He reſolved to give a looſe to his deſires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneaſineſs no more.

He immediately procured a ſplendid equipage, dreſſed his ſervants in rich embroidery, and covered his horſes with golden capariſons. He ſhowered down ſilver on the populace, and ſuffered their acclamations to ſwell him with inſolence. The nobles ſaw him with anger, the wiſe men of the ſtate combined againſt him, the leaders of armies threatened his deſtruction. *Almamoulin* was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the preſence of his enemies, and appeaſed them with gold, and gems, and ſupplication.

He then ſought to ſtrengthen himſelf, by an alliance with the princes of *Tartary*, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His ſuit was generally rejected, and his preſents refuſed; but a princeſs of *Aſtracan* once condeſcended to admit him to her preſence. She received him ſitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and ſhining with the jewels of *Golconda*; command ſparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. *Almamoulin* approached and trembled. She ſaw his confuſion, and diſdained him: How, ſays ſhe, dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus ſhrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in ſordid oſtentation; thou waſt born to be wealthy, but never canſt be great.

He then contracted his deſires to more private and domeſtick pleaſures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he

transplanted

tranſplanted foreſts, he levelled mountains, opened proſpects into diſtant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

Theſe amuſements pleaſed him for a time; but languor and wearineſs ſoon invaded him. His bowers loſt their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchaſed large tracts of land in diſtant provinces, adorned them with houſes of pleaſure, and diverſified them with accommodations for different ſeaſons. Change of place at firſt relieved his ſatiety, but all the novelties of ſituation were ſoon exhauſted; he found his heart vacant, and his deſires, for want of external objects, ravaging himſelf.

He therefore returned to *Samarcand*, and ſet open his doors to thoſe whom idleneſs ſends out in ſearch of pleaſure. His tables were always covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage ſparkled in his bowls, and his lamps ſcattered perfumes. The ſound of the lute, and the voice of the ſinger, chaſed away ſadneſs; every hour was crowded with pleaſure; and the day ended and began with feaſts and dances, and revelry and merriment. *Almamoulin* cried out, "I "have at laſt found the uſe of riches; I am ſur-"rounded by companions, who view my greatneſs "without envy; and I enjoy at once the raptures of "popularity, and the ſafety of an obſcure ſtation. "What trouble can he feel, whom all are ſtudious "to pleaſe, that they may be repaid with pleaſure? "What danger can he dread, to whom every man "is a friend?"

Such were the thoughts of *Almamoulin*, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay aſſembly, regaling

galing at his expence; but in the midſt of this ſoliloquy, an officer of juſtice entered the houſe, and, in the form of legal citation, ſummoned *Almamoulin* to appear before the emperor. The gueſts ſtood awhile aghaſt, then ſtole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a ſingle voice to witneſs his integrity. He now found one of his moſt frequent viſitants accuſing him of treaſon, in hopes of ſharing his confiſcation; yet, unpatronized and unſupported, he cleared himſelf by the openneſs of innocence, and the conſiſtence of truth; he was diſmiſſed with honour, and his accuſer periſhed in priſon.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reaſon he had hoped for juſtice or fidelity from thoſe who live only to gratify their ſenſes; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitleſs reſearches after felicity, he had recourſe to a ſage, who, after ſpending his youth in travel and obſervation, had retired from all human cares, to a ſmall habitation on the banks of *Oxus*, where he converſed only with ſuch as ſolicited his counſel. "Brother," ſaid the philoſopher, "thou haſt ſuffered thy reaſon "to be deluded by idle hopes, and fallacious ap-"pearances. Having long looked with deſire upon "riches, thou hadſt taught thyſelf to think them "more valuable than nature deſigned them, and to "expect from them, what experience has now taught "thee, that they cannot give. That they do not "confer wiſdom, thou mayeſt be convinced, by con-"ſidering at how dear a price they tempted thee, "upon thy firſt entrance into the world, to purchaſe "the empty ſound of vulgar acclamation. That "they cannot beſtow fortitude or magnanimity, that

"man

"man may be certain, who ſtood trembling at *Aſtra-*
"*can*, before a being not naturally ſuperior to him-
"ſelf. That they will not ſupply unexhauſted plea-
"ſure, the recollection of forſaken palaces, and ne-
"glected gardens, will eaſily inform thee. That
"they rarely purchaſe friends, thou didſt ſoon diſ-
"cover, when thou wert left to ſtand thy trial un-
"countenanced and alone. Yet think not riches
"uſeleſs; there are purpoſes, to which a wiſe man
"may be delighted to apply them; they may, by a
"rational diſtribution to thoſe who want them, eaſe
"the pains of helpleſs diſeaſe, ſtill the throbs of reſt-
"leſs anxiety, relieve innocence from oppreſſion, and
"raiſe imbecility to cheerfulneſs and vigour. This
"they will enable thee to perform, and this will
"afford the only happineſs ordained for our preſent
"ſtate, the confidence of divine favour, and the
"hope of future rewards."

NUMB. 121. TUESDAY, *May* 14, 1751.

O imitatores, ſervum pecus! HOR.

Away, ye imitators, ſervile herd! ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been informed by a letter, from one of the univerſities, that among the youth from whom the next ſwarm of reaſoners is to learn philoſophy, and the next flight of beauties to hear elegies and ſonnets, there are many, who, inſtead of endeavouring by books and meditation to form their own opinions, content themſelves with the ſecondary knowledge, which a convenient bench in a coffee-houſe can ſupply; and, without any examination or diſtinction, adopt the criticiſms and remarks, which happen to drop from thoſe, who have riſen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

Theſe humble retailers of knowledge my correſpondent ſtigmatizes with the name of *Echoes*; and ſeems deſirous that they ſhould be made aſhamed of lazy ſubmiſſion, and animated to attempts after new diſcoveries, and original ſentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious, and ſevere. For, as they ſeldom comprehend at once all the conſequences of a poſition, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more experienced reaſoners are reſtrained from confidence, they form their concluſions with great precipitance. Seeing nothing that can darken or embarraſs the queſtion, they expect to find their own opinion univerſally

verſally prevalent and are inclined to impute uncertainty and heſitation to want of honeſty, rather than of knowledge. I may perhaps, therefore, be reproached by my lively correſpondent, when it ſhall be found, that I have no inclination to perſecute theſe collectors of fortuitous knowledge with the ſeverity required; yet, as I am now too old to be much pained by haſty cenſure, I ſhall not be afraid of taking into protection thoſe whom I think condemned without a ſufficient knowledge of their cauſe.

He that adopts the ſentiments of another, whom he has reaſon to believe wiſer than himſelf, is only to be blamed when he claims the honours which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive the world into praiſe and veneration; for, to learn, is the proper buſineſs of youth; and whether we increaſe our knowledge by books or by converſation, we are equally indebted to foreign aſſiſtance.

The greater part of ſtudents are not born with abilities to conſtruct ſyſtems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the ſchools of art, of being able to comprehend what others diſcover, and to remember what others teach. Even thoſe to whom Providence hath allotted greater ſtrength of underſtanding, can expect only to improve a ſingle ſcience. In every other part of learning, they muſt be content to follow opinions, which they are not able to examine; and, even in that which they claim as peculiarly their own, can ſeldom add more than ſome ſmall particle of knowledge, to the hereditary ſtock

devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thouſand intellects.

In ſcience, which, being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than ſuch as ariſes from new methods of diſtribution, or new arts of illuſtration, the neceſſity of following the traces of our predeceſſors is indiſputably evident; but there appears no reaſon, why imagination ſhould be ſubject to the ſame reſtraint. It might be conceived, that of thoſe who profeſs to forſake the narrow paths of truth every one may deviate towards a different point, ſince though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be infinitely diverſified. The roads of ſcience are narrow, ſo that they who travel them, muſt either follow or meet one another; but in the boundleſs regions of poſſibility, which fiction claims for her dominion, there are ſurely a thouſand receſſes unexplored, a thouſand flowers unplucked, a thouſand fountains unexhauſted, combinations of imagery yet unobſerved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto deſcribed.

Yet, whatever hope may perſuade, or reaſon evince, experience can boaſt of very few additions to ancient fable. The wars of *Troy*, and the travels of *Ulyſſes*, have furniſhed almoſt all ſucceeding poets with incidents, characters, and ſentiments. The *Romans* are confeſſed to have attempted little more than to diſplay in their own tongue the inventions of the *Greeks*. There is, in all their writings, ſuch a perpetual recurrence of alluſions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they muſt be confeſſed often to want that power of giving pleaſure which

novelty

novelty ſupplies; nor can we wonder that they excelled ſo much in the graces of diction, when we conſider how rarely they were employed in ſearch of new thoughts.

The warmeſt admirers of the great *Mantuan* poet can extol him for little more than the ſkill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warrior, united the beauties of the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey* in one compoſition: yet his judgment was perhaps ſometimes overborn by his avarice of the *Homeric* treaſures; and, for fear of ſuffering a ſparkling ornament to be loſt, he has inſerted it where it cannot ſhine with its original ſplendor.

When *Ulyſſes* viſited the infernal regions, he found, among the heroes that periſhed at *Troy*, his competitor *Ajax*, who, when the arms of *Achilles* were adjudged to *Ulyſſes*, died by his own hand in the madneſs of diſappointment. He ſtill appeared to reſent, as on earth, his loſs and diſgrace. *Ulyſſes* endeavoured to pacify him with praiſes and ſubmiſſion; but *Ajax* walked away without reply. This paſſage has always been conſidered as eminently beautiful; becauſe *Ajax*, the haughty chief, the unlettered ſoldier, of unſhaken courage, of immoveable conſtancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his aſſertions by any other argument than the ſword, had no way of making his anger known, but by gloomy ſullenneſs and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally ſhewn by ſilence more contemptuous and piercing than any words that ſo rude an orator could have

found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superior.

When *Æneas* is sent by *Virgil* to the shades, he meets *Dido* the queen of *Carthage*, whom his perfidy had hurried to the grave; he accosts her with tenderness and excuses; but the lady turns away like *Ajax* in mute disdain. She turns away like *Ajax*; but she resembles him in none of those qualities which give either dignity or propriety to silence. She might, without any departure from the tenour of her conduct, have burst out like other injured women into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but *Virgil* had his imagination full of *Ajax*, and therefore could not prevail on himself to teach *Dido* any other mode of resentment.

If *Virgil* could be thus seduced by imitation, there will be little hope, that common wits should escape; and accordingly we find, that besides the universal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular species of fiction. At one time all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was seen but in a vision; at one period all the poets followed sheep, and every event produced a pastoral; at another they busied themselves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is favoured, and imbecility assisted; but surely no man of genius can much applaud himself for repeating a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There

There are, I think, two ſchemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the preſent time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of ſenſe to all the rhymes which our language can ſupply to ſome word, that makes the burden of the ſtanza; but this, as it has been only uſed in a kind of amorous burleſque, can ſcarcely be cenſured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of *Spenſer*, which, by the influence of ſome men of learning and genius, ſeems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deſerves to be more attentively conſidered.

To imitate the fictions and ſentiments of *Spenſer* can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the moſt pleaſing vehicles of inſtruction. But I am very far from extending the ſame reſpect to his diction or his ſtanza. His ſtyle was in his own time allowed to be vicious, ſo darkened with old words and peculiarities of phraſe, and ſo remote from common uſe, that *Johnſon* boldly pronounces him *to have written no language*. His ſtanza is at once difficult and unpleaſing; tireſome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at firſt formed in imitation of the *Italian* poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The *Italians* have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive ſuch a ſtanza as might admit the greateſt number of ſimilar rhymes; but our words end with ſo much diverſity, that it is ſeldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the ſame ſound together. If it be juſtly obſerved by *Milton*, that rhyme obliges poets to expreſs their thoughts in improper terms, theſe improprieties muſt always

be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increaſed by long concatenations.

The imitators of *Spenſer* are indeed not very rigid cenſors of themſelves, for they ſeem to conclude, that when they have disfigured their lines with a few obſolete ſyllables, they have accompliſhed their deſign, without conſidering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced ſince the time of *Spenſer*, as the character of *Hector* is violated by quoting *Ariſtotle* in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phraſes, though it is eaſy to ſprinkle it with gleanings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the ſtyle of *Spenſer* might by long labour be juſtly copied; but life is ſurely given us for higher purpoſes than to gather what our anceſtors have wiſely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but becauſe it has been forgotten.

NUMB. 122. SATURDAY, *May* 18, 1751.

Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine cunctos
Ducit. OVID.

By secret charms our native land attracts.

NOTHING is more subject to mistake and disappointment than anticipated judgment concerning the easiness or difficulty of any undertaking, whether we form our opinion from the performance of others, or from abstracted contemplation of the thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done skilfully appears to be done with ease; and art, when it is once matured to habit, vanishes from observation. We are therefore more powerfully excited to emulation, by those who have attained the highest degree of excellence, and whom we can therefore with least reason hope to equal.

In adjusting the probability of success by a previous consideration of the undertaking, we are equally in danger of deceiving ourselves. It is never easy, nor often possible, to comprise the series of any process with all its circumstances, incidents, and variations, in a speculative scheme. Experience soon shews us the tortuosities of imaginary rectitude, the complications of simplicity, and the asperities of smoothness. Sudden difficulties often start up from the ambushes of art, stop the career of activity, repress the gaiety of confidence, and when we imagine

ourſelves almoſt at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different meaſures.

There are many things which we every day ſee others unable to perform, and perhaps have even ourſelves miſcarried in attempting; and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afreſh at every new failure, or to promiſe certainty of ſucceſs to our next eſſay; but when we try, the ſame hindrances recur, the ſame inability is perceived, and the vexation of diſappointment muſt again be ſuffered.

Of the various kinds of ſpeaking or writing, which ſerve neceſſity, or promote pleaſure, none appears ſo artleſs or eaſy as ſimple narration; for what ſhould make him that knows the whole order and progreſs of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find ſuch as endeavour to entertain or inſtruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illuſtrate, and loſing themſelves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digreſſion and confuſion. When we have congratulated ourſelves upon a new opportunity of enquiry, and new means of information, it often happens, that without deſigning either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingneſs to diſcloſe it, the relator fills the ear with empty ſounds, haraſſes the attention with fruitleſs impatience, and diſturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of conſequence.

It is natural to believe, upon the ſame principle, that no writer has a more eaſy taſk than the hiſtorian. The philoſopher has the works of omniſcience to examine; and is therefore engaged in

diſquiſi-

difquifitions, to which finite intellects are utterly unequal. The poet trufts to his invention, and is not only in danger of thofe inconfiftencies, to which every one is expofed by departure from truth; but may be cenfured as well for deficiencies of matter, as for irregularity of difpofition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy hiftorian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treafure for his ufe. He has only the actions and defigns of men like himfelf to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconfiftency of ftatefmen, the injuftice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety confiftent, or uniting probability with furprize, needs not to difturb him; the manners and actions of his perfonages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leifure to employ all his powers in arranging and difplaying them.

Yet, even with thefe advantages, very few in any age have been able to raife themfelves to reputation by writing hiftories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their anceftors, or undertake to tranfmit to futurity the events of their own time, the greater part, when fafhion and novelty have ceafed to recommend them, are of no other ufe than chronological memorials, which neceffity may fometimes require to be confulted, but which fright away curiofity, and difguft delicacy.

It

It is obſerved, that our nation, which has produced ſo many authors eminent for almoſt every other ſpecies of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of hiſtorical genius; and ſo far has this defect raiſed prejudices againſt us, that ſome have doubted whether an *Engliſhman* can ſtop at that mediocrity of ſtyle, or confine his mind to that even tenour of imagination which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has ſo capriciouſly diſtributed underſtanding, have ſurely no claim to the honour of ſerious confutation. The inhabitants of the ſame country have oppoſite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular ſtudy can proceed only from the accidental influence of ſome temporary cauſe; and if we have failed in hiſtory, we can have failed only becauſe hiſtory has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have not hiſtorians among us, whom we may venture to place in compariſon with any that the neighbouring nations can produce? The attempt of *Raleigh* is deſervedly celebrated for the labour of his reſearches, and the elegance of his ſtyle; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius, to ſelect facts, rather than adorn them; and has produced an hiſtorical diſſertation, but ſeldom riſen to the majeſty of hiſtory.

The works of *Clarendon* deſerve more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itſelf, nor ſuited to the purpoſe of hiſtory. It is the effuſion of a mind crowded with ideas, and deſirous of imparting them; and therefore always accumulating words, and involving

volving one clauſe and ſentence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude inartificial majeſty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance, ſwells the mind by its plenitude and diffuſion. His narration is not perhaps ſufficiently rapid, being ſtopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might ſtrike the author who was preſent at the tranſactions, will not equally detain the attention of poſterity. But his ignorance or careleſneſs of the art of writing are amply compenſated by his knowedge of nature and of policy; the wiſdom of his maxims, the juſtneſs of his reaſonings, and the variety, diſtinctneſs, and ſtrength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, juſtly conteſt the ſuperiority of *Knolles*, who, in his hiſtory of the *Turks*, has diſplayed all the excellencies that narration can admit. His ſtyle, though ſomewhat obſcured by time, and ſometimes vitiated by falſe wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is ſo artfully arranged, and ſo diſtinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new perſonage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is firſt attacked, or city beſieged, he is made acquainted with its hiſtory, or ſituation; ſo that a great part of the world is brought into view. The deſcriptions of this author are without minuteneſs, and the digreſſions without oſtentation. Collateral events are ſo artfully woven into the contexture of his principal ſtory, that they cannot be disjoined, without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid

in

in his dignity, nor ſuperfluous in his copiouſneſs. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient hiſtorians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occaſions, are tedious and languid; and ſince they are merely the voluntary ſports of imagination, prove how much the moſt judicious and ſkilful may be miſtaken, in the eſtimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have ſunk this author into obſcurity, but the remoteneſs and barbarity of the people, whoſe ſtory he relates. It ſeldom happens, that all circumſtances concur to happineſs or fame. The nation which produced this great hiſtorian, has the grief of ſeeing his genius employed upon a foreign and unintereſting ſubject; and that writer, who might have ſecured perpetuity to his name, by a hiſtory of his own country, has expoſed himſelf to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprizes and revolutions, of which none deſire to be informed.

NUMB. 123. TUESDAY, *May* 21, 1751.

Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens, ſervabit odorem
Teſta diu. HOR.

What ſeaſon'd firſt the veſſel, keeps the taſte. CREECH.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH I have ſo long found myſelf deluded by projects of honour and diſtinction, that I often reſolve to admit them no more into my heart; yet how determinately ſoever excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or ſtratagem; and whenever, after the ſhorteſt relaxation of vigilance, reaſon and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in poſſeſſion, with all her train of pleaſures dancing about her.

Even while I am preparing to write a hiſtory of diſappointed expectations, I cannot forbear to flatter myſelf, that you and your readers are impatient for my performance; and that the ſons of learning have laid down ſeveral of your late papers with diſcontent, when they found that *Myſocapelus* had delayed to continue his narrative.

But the deſire of gratifying the expectations that I have raiſed, is not the only motive of this relation, which, having once promiſed it, I think myſelf no longer at liberty to forbear. For however I may have wiſhed to clear myſelf from every other adheſion

ſion of trade, I hope I ſhall be always wiſe enough to retain my punctuality, and amidſt all my new arts of politeneſs, continue to deſpiſe negligence, and deteſt falſehood.

When the death of my brother had diſmiſſed me from the duties of a ſhop, I conſidered myſelf as reſtored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception which my anceſtors obtained. I was, however, embarraſſed with many difficulties at my firſt re-entrance into the world; for my haſte to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate meaſures; and every accident that forced me back towards my old ſtation, was conſidered by me as an obſtruction of my happineſs.

It was with no common grief and indignation, that I found my former companions ſtill daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices ſometimes pulling me by the ſleeve as I was walking in the ſtreet, and without any terror of my new ſword, which was, notwithſtanding, of an uncommon ſize, inviting me to partake of a bottle at the old houſe, and entertaining me with hiſtories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my officinal ſtate, been kept in awe by lace and embroidery; and imagined that to fright away theſe unwelcome familiarities, nothing was neceſſary, but that I ſhould, by ſplendor of dreſs, proclaim my reunion with a higher rank. I therefore ſent for my taylor; ordered a ſuit with twice the uſual quantity of lace; and that I might not let my perſecutors increaſe their confidence, by the habit of accoſting me, ſtaid at home till it was made.

This

This week of confinement I paſſed in practiſing a forbidding frown, a ſmile of condeſcenſion, a ſlight ſalutation, and an abrupt departure; and in four mornings was able to turn upon my heel, with ſo much levity and ſprightlineſs, that I made no doubt of diſcouraging all publick attempts upon my dignity. I therefore iſſued forth in my new coat, with a reſolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter diſtance; and pleaſed myſelf with the timidity and reverence, which I ſhould impreſs upon all who had hitherto preſumed to haraſs me with their freedoms. But whatever was the cauſe, I did not find myſelf received with any new degree of reſpect; thoſe whom I intended to drive from me, ventured to advance with their uſual phraſes of benevolence; and thoſe whoſe acquaintance I ſolicited, grew more ſupercilious and reſerved. I began ſoon to repent the expence, by which I had procured no advantage, and to ſuſpect that a ſhining dreſs, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itſelf, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

Many were the mortifications and calamities which I was condemned to ſuffer in my initiation to politeneſs. I was ſo much tortured by the inceſſant civilities of my companions, that I never paſſed through that region of the city but in a chair with the curtains drawn; and at laſt left my lodgings, and fixed myſelf in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a gentleman juſt returned from his travels, and was pleaſed to have my landlord believe that I was in ſome danger from importunate creditors; but this ſcheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation ſent to offer me, though I had now retired from buſineſs, the freedom of my company.

I was now detected in trade, and therefore resolved to stay no longer. I hired another apartment, and changed my servants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with secret satisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatness and felicity of the esquire; though the conversation seldom ended without some complaint of my covetousness, or some remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the publick walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties; but could not observe, without wonder, as I passed by them, how frequently they were talking of a taylor. I longed, however, to be admitted to conversation, and was somewhat weary of walking in crowds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the rest, till a lady whom I endeavoured to protect in a crowded passage, as she was about to step into her chariot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that, as she had often distinguished me for my modest and respectful behaviour, whenever I set up for myself, I might expect to see her among my first customers.

Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects. I indeed sometimes entered the walks again, but was always blasted by this destructive lady, whose mischievous generosity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being therefore forced to practise my adscititious character upon another stage, I betook myself to a coffee-house frequented by wits, among whom I learned in a short time the cant of criticism, and talked so loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and sentiment, and diction, and similies, and contrasts, and action, and pronunciation, that I was often desired to lead the hiss and clap, and was feared

and hated by the players and the poets. Many a ſentence have I hiſſed, which I did not underſtand, and many a groan have I uttered, when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At laſt a malignant author, whoſe performance I had perſecuted through the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon *Tape* the critick, which drove me from the pit for ever.

My deſire to be a fine gentleman ſtill continued: I therefore, after a ſhort ſuſpenſe, choſe a new ſet of friends at the gaming-table, and was for ſome time pleaſed with the civility and openneſs with which I found myſelf treated. I was indeed obliged to play; but being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never ſurpriſed into large ſums. What might have been the conſequence of long familiarity with theſe plunderers, I had not an opportunity of knowing; for one night the conſtables entered and ſeized us, and I was once more compelled to ſink into my former condition, by ſending for my old maſter to atteſt my character.

When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I ſhould aſpire, I was ſummoned into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to diſtinguiſh myſelf, and to ſupport the honour of my family. I therefore bought guns and horſes, and, contrary to the expectation of the tenants, increaſed the ſalary of the huntſman. But when I entered the field, it was ſoon diſcovered, that I was not deſtined to the glories of the chace. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, and of dirt in the marſh; I ſhivered on the brink of a river while the ſportſman croſſed it, and trembled at the ſight of a five-bar gate. When the

ſport and danger were over, I was ſtill equally diſconcerted; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feebly whiſpering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

A fall, by which my ribs were broken, ſoon recalled me to domeſtick pleaſures, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies; but wherever I came, there was always ſome unlucky converſation upon ribbands, fillets, pins, or thread, which drove all my ſtock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with ſhame and dejection.

Thus I paſſed the ten firſt years after the death of my brother, in which I have learned at laſt to repreſs that ambition, which I could never gratify; and, inſtead of waſting more of my life in vain endeavours after accompliſhments, which, if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I ſhall confine my care to thoſe higher excellencies which are in every man's power; and though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and eaſe, hope to ſecure eſteem by honeſty and truth.

I am, *&c.*

Misocapelus.

NUMB. 124. SATURDAY, *May* 25, 1751.

——*Tacitum ſylvas inter reptare ſalubres,*
Curantem quicquid dignum ſapiente bonoque eſt. HOR.

To range in ſilence through each healthful wood,
And muſe what's worthy of the wiſe and good.
ELPHINSTON.

THE ſeaſon of the year is now come, in which the theatres are ſhut, and the card-tables forſaken; the regions of luxury are for a while unpeopled, and pleaſure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to ſtill ſcenes and erratick gratifications. Thoſe who have paſſed many months in a continual tumult of diverſion; who have never opened their eyes in the morning, but upon ſome new appointment; nor ſlept at night without a dream of dances, muſick, and good hands, or of ſoft ſighs, and humble ſupplications; muſt now retire to diſtant provinces, where the ſirens of flattery are ſcarcely to be heard, where beauty ſparkles without praiſe or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the moſt important duties of ſocial benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity, when by timely prevention it may be turned aſide, or by preparatory meaſures be more eaſily endured, I cannot feel the increaſing warmth, or obſerve the lengthening days, without conſidering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has ſo long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accuſtomed to

hope for delight; and who, till faſhion proclaims the liberty of returning to the ſeats of mirth and elegance, muſt endure the rugged 'ſquire, the ſober houſewife, the loud huntſman, or the formal parſon, the roar of obſtreperous jollity, or the dulneſs of prudential inſtruction; without any retreat, but to the gloom of ſolitude, where they will yet find greater inconveniencies, and muſt learn, however unwillingly, to endure themſelves.

In winter, the life of the polite and gay may be ſaid to roll on with a ſtrong and rapid current; they float along from pleaſure to pleaſure, without the trouble of regulating their own motions, and purſue the courſe of the ſtream in all the felicity of inattention; content that they find themſelves in progreſſion, and careleſs whither they are going. But the months of ſummer are a kind of ſleeping ſtagnation without wind or tide, where they are left to force themſelves forward by their own labour, and to direct their paſſage by their own ſkill; and where, if they have not ſome internal principle of activity, they muſt be ſtranded upon ſhallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

There are, indeed, ſome to whom this univerſal diſſolution of gay ſocieties affords a welcome opportunity of quitting, without diſgrace, the poſt which they have found themſelves unable to maintain; and of ſeeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from aſſemblies where, after a ſhort triumph of unconteſted ſuperiority, they are overpowered by ſome new intruder of ſofter elegance or ſprightlier vivacity. By theſe, hopeleſs of victory, and yet aſhamed to confeſs a conqueſt, the ſummer is regarded as a releaſe from

the fatiguing ſervice of celebrity, a diſmiſſion to more certain joys and a ſafer empire. They now ſolace themſelves with the influence which they ſhall obtain, where they have no rival to fear; and with the luſtre which they ſhall effuſe, when nothing can be ſeen of brighter ſplendour. They imagine, while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the ruſticks will crowd about them; plan the laws of a new aſſembly; or contrive to delude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thouſand pleaſing expectations ſwarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with diſtinctions, honours, and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconſtancy and deſertion, are cut off, by this cruel interruption, from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to loſe four months in inactive obſcurity. Many complaints do vexation and deſire extort from thoſe exiled tyrants of the town, againſt the inexorable ſun, who purſues his courſe without any regard to love or beauty; and viſits either tropick at the ſtated time, whether ſhunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of publick reſort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from admiration, courtſhip, ſubmiſſion, and applauſe, a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent. The praiſe of ignorance, and the ſubjection of weakneſs, are little regarded by beauties who have been accuſtomed to more important conqueſts, and more valuable panegyricks. Nor indeed ſhould the powers which have made havock in the theatres, or borne down rivalry in courts, be degraded to a mean attack upon

the untravelled heir, or ignoble conteſt with the ruddy milkmaid.

How then muſt four long months be worn away? Four months, in which there will be no routes, no ſhews, no ridottos; in which viſits muſt be regulated by the weather, and aſſemblies will depend upon the moon! The Platoniſts imagine, that the future puniſhment of thoſe who have in this life debaſed their reaſon by ſubjection to their ſenſes, and have preferred the groſs gratifications of lewdneſs and luxury, to the pure and ſublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will ariſe from the predominance and ſolicitations of the ſame appetites, in a ſtate which can furniſh no means of appeaſing them. I cannot but ſuſpect that this month, bright with ſunſhine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month, which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixtures of colorofick radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infuſions of imagery, and the naturaliſt new ſcenes of obſervation; this month will chain down multitudes to the *Platonick* penance of deſire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the higheſt ſatisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a ſtate of hopeleſs wiſhes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpoſe, and the hand of avarice ſhuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

From the tedioùſneſs of this melancholy ſuſpenſion of life, I would willingly preſerve thoſe who are expoſed to it, only by inexperience; who want not inclination to wiſdom or virtue, though they have been diſſipated by negligence, or miſled by example; and

who

who would gladly find the way to rational happineſs, though it ſhould be neceſſary to ſtruggle with habit, and abandon faſhion. To theſe many arts of ſpending time might be recommended, which would neither ſadden the preſent hour with wearineſs, nor the future with repentance.

It would ſeem impoſſible to a ſolitary ſpeculatiſt, that a human being can want employment. To be born in ignorance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midſt of a world filled with variety, perpetually preſſing upon the ſenſes and irritating curioſity, is ſurely a ſufficient ſecurity againſt the languiſhment of inattention. Novelty is indeed neceſſary to preſerve eagerneſs and alacrity; but art and nature have ſtores inexhauſtible by human intellects; and every moment produces ſomething new to him, who has quickened his faculties by diligent obſervation.

Some ſtudies, for which the country and the ſummer afford peculiar opportunities, I ſhall perhaps endeavour to recommend in a future eſſay; but if there be any apprehenſion not apt to admit unaccuſtomed ideas, or any attention ſo ſtubborn and inflexible, as not eaſily to comply with new directions, even theſe obſtructions cannot exclude the pleaſure of application; for there is a higher and nobler employment, to which all faculties are adapted by him who gave them. The duties of religion, ſincerely and regularly performed, will always be ſufficient to exalt the meaneſt, and to exerciſe the higheſt underſtanding. That mind will never be vacant, which is frequently recalled by ſtated duties to meditations on eternal intereſts; nor can any hour be long, which is ſpent in obtaining ſome new qualification for celeſtial happineſs.

NUMB. 125. TUESDAY, *May* 28, 1751.

Deſcriptas ſervare vices, operumque colores,
Cur ego, ſi nequeo ignoroque, poëta ſalutor? HOR.

But if, through weakneſs, or my want of art,
I can't to every different ſtyle impart
The proper ſtrokes and colours it may claim,
Why am I honour'd with a poet's name? FRANCIS.

IT is one of the maxims of the civil law, that *definitions are hazardous.* Things modified by human underſtandings, ſubject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are ſcarcely to be included in any ſtanding form of expreſſion, becauſe they are always ſuffering ſome alteration of their ſtate. Definition is, indeed, not the province of man; every thing is ſet above or below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent, or too much diffuſed in their relations, and the performances of art too inconſtant and uncertain, to be reduced to any determinate idea. It is impoſſible to impreſs upon our minds an adequate and juſt repreſentation of an object ſo great that we can never take it into our view, or ſo mutable that it is always changing under our eye, and has already loſt its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no leſs difficult or uncertain in criticiſms than in law. Imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unſuſceptible of limitations, and impatient

impatient of reſtraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of diſtinction, and burſt the incloſures of regularity. There is therefore ſcarcely any ſpecies of writing, of which we can tell what is its eſſence, and what are its conſtituents; every new genius produces ſome innovation, which, when invented and approved, ſubverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had eſtabliſhed.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers; for though perhaps they might properly have contented themſelves, with declaring it to be *ſuch a dramatick repreſentation of human life, as may excite mirth*, they have embarraſſed their definition with the means by which the comick writers attain their end, without conſidering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be compriſed in precept. Thus, ſome make comedy a repreſentation of mean, and others of bad men; ſome think that its eſſence conſiſts in the unimportance, others in the fictitiouſneſs of the tranſaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatick compoſition which raiſes mirth, is comick; and that, to raiſe mirth, it is by no means univerſally neceſſary, that the perſonages ſhould be either mean or corrupt, nor always requiſite, that the action ſhould be trivial, nor ever, that it ſhould be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatick poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, ſome abſurdities might have been prevented, with which the compoſitions of our greateſt poets are diſgraced, who,

who, for want of ſome ſettled ideas and accurate diſtinctions, have unhappily confounded tragick with comick ſentiments. They ſeem to have thought, that as the meanneſs of perſonages conſtituted comedy, their greatneſs was ſufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was neceſſary but that they ſhould crowd the ſcene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfal of kingdoms, and the rout of armies. They have not conſidered, that thoughts or incidents, in themſelves ridiculous, grow ſtill more groteſque by the ſolemnity of ſuch characters; that reaſon and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is deſpicable and abſurd, will not, by any aſſociation with ſplendid titles, become rational or great; that the moſt important affairs, by an intermixture of an unſeaſonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonſenſe or to folly.

"Comedy," ſays *Horace*, "ſometimes raiſes her "voice;" and tragedy may likewiſe on proper occaſions abate her dignity; but as the comick perſonages can only depart from their familiarity of ſtyle, when the more violent paſſions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy ſhould never deſcend to trifle, but in the hours of eaſe, and intermiſſions of danger. Yet in the tragedy of *Don Sebaſtian*, when the king of *Portugal* is in the hands of his enemy, and having juſt drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boaſt that his duſt ſhall take poſſeſſion of *Africk*, the

the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

Muley Moluch. What ſhall I do to conquer thee?
Seb. Impoſſible!
Souls know no conquerors.
M. Mol. I'll ſhew thee for a monſter thro' my *Africk.*
Seb. No, thou canſt only ſhew me for a man:
Africk is ſtor'd with monſters; man's a prodigy
Thy ſubjects have not ſeen.
M. Mol. Thou talk'ſt as if
Still at the head of battle.
Seb. Thou miſtak'ſt,
For there I would not talk.
Benducar, the Miniſter. Sure he would ſleep.

This converſation, with the ſly remark of the miniſter, can only be found not to be comick, becauſe it wants the probability neceſſary to repreſentations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonry and farce.

The ſame play affords a ſmart return of the general to the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of *Sebaſtian,* vents his impatience in this abrupt threat:

——No more replies,
But ſee thou doſt it: Or——

To which *Dorax* anſwers,

Choak in that threat: I can ſay Or as loud.

A thouſand inſtances of ſuch impropriety might be produced, were not one ſcene in *Aureng-Zebe* ſufficient to exemplify it. *Indamora,* a captive queen, having *Aureng-Zebe* for her lover, employs *Arimant,* to

to whoſe charge ſhe had been intruſted, and whom ſhe had made ſenſible of her charms, to carry a meſſage to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand:* INDAMORA.

Arim. And I the meſſenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny purſue:
You lay commands, both cruel and unjuſt,
To ſerve my rival, and betray my truſt.
Ind. You firſt betray'd your truſt in loving me;
And ſhould not I my own advantage ſee?
Serving my love, you may my friendſhip gain;
You know the reſt of your pretences vain.
You muſt, my *Arimant*, you muſt be kind:
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.
Arim. I'll to the king, and ſtrait my truſt reſign.
Ind. His truſt you may, but you ſhall never mine.
Heaven made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confidant and friend:
As ſuch, I keep no ſecret from your ſight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write:
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.
Arim. *I aſk not heav'n my freedom to reſtore,*— [Reading.
But only for your ſake———I'll read no more.
And yet I muſt———
Leſs for my own, than for your ſorrow ſad—— [Reading.
Another line, like this, would make me mad——
Heav'n! ſhe goes on——yet more——and yet more kind!
[*As Reading.*
Each ſentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night—— [Reading.
Thank fortune, who did ſuch a friend provide;
For faithful Arimant *ſhall be your guide.*
Not only to be made an inſtrument,
But pre-engag'd without my own conſent!

Ind.

Ind. Unknown t'engage you, ſtill augments my ſcore,
And gives you ſcope of meriting the more.
Arim. The beſt of men
Some int'reſt in their actions muſt confeſs;
None merit, but in hope they may poſſeſs:
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like *Bellerophon*, my own ſentence bear.
Ind. You may; but 'twill not be your beſt advice:
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you muſt obey me, ſoon or late:
Why ſhould you vainly ſtruggle with your fate?
Arim. I thank thee, heav'n! thou haſt been won-d'rous kind!
Why am I thus to ſlavery deſign'd,
And yet am cheated with a freeborn mind!
Or make thy orders with my reaſon ſuit,
Or let me live by ſenſe, a glorious brute—— [*She frowns.*
You frown, and I obey with ſpeed, before
That dreadful ſentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this ſcene, every circumſtance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild abſurdity of the expedient; the contemptible ſubjection of the lover; the folly of obliging him to read the letter, only becauſe it ought to have been concealed from him; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience; the faint expoſtulations of a voluntary ſlave; the imperious haughtineſs of a tyrant without power; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and freewill; and his wiſe wiſh to loſe his reaſon as ſoon as he finds himſelf about to do what he cannot perſuade his reaſon to approve, are ſurely ſufficient to awaken the moſt torpid riſibility.

There is ſcarce a tragedy of the laſt century which has not debaſed its moſt important incidents, and pol-

luted its moſt ſerious interlocutions with buffoonry and meanneſs; but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the preſent age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at leaſt been able to eſcape many faults, which either ignorance had overlooked, or indulgence had licenſed. The later tragedies indeed have faults of another kind, perhaps more deſtructive to delight, though leſs open to cenſure. That perpetual tumour of phraſe with which every thought is now expreſſed by every perſonage, the paucity of adventures which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our preſent writers almoſt all that dominion over the paſſions which was the boaſt of their predeceſſors. Yet they may at leaſt claim this commendation, that they avoid groſs faults, and that if they cannot often move terror or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

NUMB. 126. SATURDAY, *June* 1, 1751.

—*Nihil eſt aliud magnum quam multa minuta.* VET. AUCT.

Sands form the mountain, moments make the year. YOUNG.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AMONG other topicks of converſation which your papers ſupply, I was lately engaged in a diſcuſſion of the character given by *Tranquilla* of her lover *Venuſtulus*, whom, notwithſtanding the ſeverity of his miſtreſs, the greater number ſeemed inclined to acquit of unmanly or culpable timidity.

One of the company remarked, that prudence ought to be diſtinguiſhed from fear; and that if *Venuſtulus* was afraid of nocturnal adventures, no man who conſidered how much every avenue of the town was infeſted with robbers could think him blameable; for why ſhould life be hazarded without proſpect of honour or advantage? Another was of opinion, that a brave man might be afraid of croſſing the river in the calmeſt weather; and declared, that, for his part, while there were coaches and a bridge, he would never be ſeen tottering in a wooden caſe, out of which he might be thrown by any irregular agitation, or which might be overſet by accident, or negligence, or by the force of a ſudden guſt, or the ruſh of a larger veſſel. It was his cuſtom, he ſaid, to keep the ſecurity of day-light, and dry ground;

for it was a maxim with him, that no wiſe man ever periſhed by water, or was loſt in the dark.

The next was humbly of opinion, that if *Tranquilla* had ſeen, like him, the cattle run roaring about the meadows in the hot months, ſhe would not have thought meanly of her lover for not venturing his ſafety among them. His neighbour then told us, that for his part he was not aſhamed to confeſs, that he could not ſee a rat, though it was dead, without palpitation; that he had been driven ſix times out of his lodgings either by rats or mice; and that he always had a bed in the cloſet for his ſervant, whom he called up whenever the enemy was in motion. Another wondered that any man ſhould think himſelf diſgraced by a precipitate retreat from a dog; for there was always a poſſibility that a dog might be mad; and that ſurely, though there was no danger but of being bit by a fierce animal, there was more wiſdom in flight than conteſt. By all theſe declarations another was encouraged to confeſs, that if he had been admitted to the honour of paying his addreſſes to *Tranquilla*, he ſhould have been likely to incur the ſame cenſure; for among all the animals upon which nature has impreſſed deformity and horror, there was none whom he durſt not encounter rather than a beetle.

Thus, Sir, though cowardice is univerſally defined too cloſe and anxious an attention to perſonal ſafety, there will be found ſcarcely any fear, however exceſſive in its degree, or unreaſonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterize a coward. Fear is a paſſion which every man feels ſo frequently predominant in his own breaſt, that he is unwilling

to

to hear it cenſured with great aſperity; and, perhaps, if we confeſs the truth, the ſame reſtraint which would hinder a man from declaiming againſt the frauds of any employment among thoſe who profeſs it, ſhould with-hold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

Yet ſince fortitude is one of thoſe virtues which the condition of our nature makes hourly neceſſary, I think you cannot better direct your admonitions than againſt ſuperfluous and panick terrors. Fear is implanted in us as a preſervative from evil; but its duty, like that of other paſſions, is not to overbear reaſon, but to aſſiſt it; nor ſhould it be ſuffered to tyrannize in the imagination, to raiſe phantoms of horror, or beſet life with ſupernumerary diſtreſſes.

To be always afraid of loſing life is, indeed, ſcarcely to enjoy a life that can deſerve the care of preſervation. He that once indulges idle fears will never be at reſt. Our preſent ſtate admits only of a kind of negative ſecurity; we muſt conclude ourſelves ſafe when we ſee no danger, or none inadequate to our powers of oppoſition. Death indeed continually hovers about us, but hovers commonly unſeen, unleſs we ſharpen our ſight by uſeleſs curioſity.

There is always a point at which caution, however ſolicitous, muſt limit its preſervatives, becauſe one terror often counteracts another. I once knew one of the ſpeculatiſts of cowardice, whoſe reigning diſturbance was the dread of houſe-breakers. His enquiries were for nine years employed upon the beſt method of barring a window, or a door; and many an hour has he ſpent in eſtabliſhing the preference

of a bolt to a lock. He had at laſt, by the daily ſuperaddition of new expedients, contrived a door which could never be forced; for one bar was ſecured by another with ſuch intricacy of ſubordination, that he was himſelf not always able to diſengage them in the proper method.. He was happy in this fortification, till being aſked how he would eſcape if he was threatened by fire, he diſcovered, that with all his care and expence, he had only been aſſiſting his own deſtruction. He then immediately tore off his bolts, and now leaves at night his outer door half-locked, that he may not by his own folly periſh in the flames.

There is one ſpecies of terror which thoſe who are unwilling to ſuffer the reproach of cowardice have wiſely dignified with the name of *antipathy*. A man who talks with intrepidity of the monſters of the wilderneſs while they are out of ſight, will readily confeſs his *antipathy* to a mole, a weaſel, or a frog. He has indeed no dread of harm from an inſect or a worm, but his *antipathy* turns him pale whenever they approach him. He believes that a boat will tranſport him with as much ſafety as his neighbours, but he cannot conquer his *antipathy* to the water. Thus he goes on without any reproach from his own reflections, and every day multiplies *antipathies*, till he becomes contemptible to others, and burdenſome to himſelf.

It is indeed certain, that impreſſions of dread may ſometimes be unluckily made by objects not in themſelves juſtly formidable; but when fear is diſcovered to be groundleſs, it is to be eradicated like other falſe opinions, and *antipathies* are generally

ſuper-

ſuperable by a ſingle effort. He that has been taught to ſhudder at a mouſe, if he can perſuade himſelf to riſque one encounter, will find his own ſuperiority, and exchange his terrors for the pride of conqueſt.

I am, SIR, &c.

THRASO.

SIR,

AS you profeſs to extend your regard to the minuteneſs of decency, as well as to the dignity of ſcience, I cannot forbear to lay before you a mode of perſecution by which I have been exiled to taverns and coffee-houſes, and deterred from entering the doors of my friends.

Among the ladies who pleaſe themſelves with ſplendid furniture, or elegant entertainment, it is a practice very common, to aſk every gueſt how he likes the carved work of the cornice, or the figures of the tapeſtry; the china at the table, or the plate on the ſide-board; and on all occaſions to enquire his opinion of their judgment and their choice. *Melania* has laid her new watch in the window nineteen times, that ſhe may deſire me to look upon it. *Caliſta* has an art of dropping her ſnuff-box by drawing out her handkerchief, that when I pick it up I may admire it; and *Fulgentia* has conducted me, by miſtake, into the wrong room, at every viſit I have paid ſince her picture was put into a new frame.

I hope, Mr. RAMBLER, you will inform them, that no man ſhould be denied the privilege of ſilence, or tortured to falſe declarations; and that though

ladies may juſtly claim to be exempt from rudeneſs, they have no right to force unwilling civilities. To pleaſe is a laudable and elegant ambition, and is properly rewarded with honeſt praiſe; but to ſeize applauſe by violence, and call out for commendation, without knowing, or caring to know, whether it be given from conviction, is a ſpecies of tyranny by which modeſty is oppreſſed, and ſincerity corrupted. The tribute of admiration, thus exacted by impudence and importunity, differs from the reſpect paid to ſilent merit, as the plunder of a pirate from the merchant's profit.

I am, &c.

MISOCOLAX.

SIR,

YOUR great predeceſſor, the Spectator, endeavoured to diffuſe among his female readers a deſire of knowledge; nor can I charge you, though you do not ſeem equally attentive to the ladies, with endeavouring to diſcourage them from any laudable purſuit. But however either he or you may excite our curioſity, you have not yet informed us how it may be gratified. The world ſeems to have formed an univerſal conſpiracy againſt our underſtandings; our queſtions are ſuppoſed not to expect anſwers, our arguments are confuted with a jeſt, and we are treated like beings who tranſgreſs the limits of our nature whenever we aſpire to ſerioufneſs or improvement.

I enquired yeſterday of a gentleman eminent for aſtronomical ſkill, what made the day long in ſummer, and ſhort in winter; and was told that nature protracted

protracted the days in ſummer, leſt ladies ſhould want time to walk in the park; and the nights in winter, leſt they ſhould not have hours ſufficient to ſpend at the card-table.

I hope you do not doubt but I heard ſuch information with juſt contempt, and I deſire you to diſcover to this great maſter of ridicule, that I was far from wanting any intelligence which he could have given me. I aſked the queſtion with no other intention than to ſet him free from the neceſſity of ſilence, and gave him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite aſſembly, from which, however uneaſy, he could not then eſcape, by a kind introduction of the only ſubject on which I believed him able to ſpeak with propriety.

I am, &c.

GENEROSA.

NUMB. 127. TUESDAY, *June* 4, 1751.

Cæpisti melius quàm desinis: ultima primis
Cedunt: dissimiles hic vir, et ille puer. OVID.

Succeeding years thy early fame destroy;
Thou, who began'st a man, wilt end a boy.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed, He might design by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But whatever was his intent, it is remarked by *Scaliger*, that he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and in the latter part of his life seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who at their first entrance into the world were distinguished for attainments or abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised, and to end in neglect and obscurity that life which they began in celebrity and honour. To the long catalogue of the inconveniencies of old age, which moral and satirical writers have so copiously displayed, may be often added the loss of fame.

The advance of the human mind towards any object of laudable pursuit, may be compared to the progress of a body driven by a blow. It moves

for a time with great velocity and vigour, but the force of the firſt impulſe is perpetually decreaſing, and though it ſhould encounter no obſtacle capable of quelling it by a ſudden ſtop, the reſiſtance of the medium through which it paſſes, and the latent inequalities of the ſmootheſt ſurface, will in a ſhort time by continued retardation wholly overpower it. Some hindrances will be found in every road of life, but he that fixes his eyes upon any thing at a diſtance, neceſſarily loſes ſight of all that fills up the intermediate ſpace, and therefore ſets forward with alacrity and confidence, nor ſuſpects a thouſand obſtacles by which he afterwards finds his paſſage embarraſſed and obſtructed. Some are indeed ſtopt at once in their career by a ſudden ſhock of calamity, or diverted to a different direction by the croſs impulſe of ſome violent paſſion; but far the greater part languiſh by ſlow degrees, deviate at firſt into ſlight obliquities, and themſelves ſcarcely perceive at what time their ardour forſook them, or when they loſt ſight of their original deſign.

Wearineſs and negligence are perpetually prevailing by ſilent encroachments, aſſiſted by different cauſes, and not obſerved till they cannot, without great difficulty, be oppoſed. Labour neceſſarily requires pauſes of eaſe and relaxation, and the delicioufneſs of eaſe commonly makes us unwilling to return to labour. We, perhaps, prevail upon ourſelves to renew our attempts, but eagerly liſten to every argument for frequent interpoſitions of amuſement; for when indoleence has once entered upon the mind, it can ſcarcely be diſpoſſeſſed but by ſuch efforts as very few are willing to exert.

It is the fate of induſtry to be equally endangered by miſcarriage and ſucceſs, by confidence and deſpondency. He that engages in a great undertaking with a falſe opinion of its facility, or too high conceptions of his own ſtrength, is eaſily diſcouraged by the firſt hindrance of his advances, becauſe he had promiſed himſelf an equal and perpetual progreſſion without impediment or diſturbance; when unexpected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the ſtate of a man ſurpriſed by a tempeſt, where he purpoſed only to baſk in the calm, or ſport in the ſhallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprize greater, but the profit leſs, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herſelf not only certain of accompliſhing every adventure, but of obtaining thoſe rewards which the accompliſhment may deſerve. She is not eaſily perſuaded to believe that the force of merit can be reſiſted by obſtinacy and avarice, or its luſtre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the moſt evident claims to praiſe or preferment may be rejected by malice againſt conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be ſometimes defeated by artifices, and ſometimes overborn by clamour; that in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themſelves excelled; that others have ceaſed their curioſity, and conſider every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and diſturber of their repoſe; that ſome are en-

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gaged in complications of intereſt which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themſelves up implicitly to every report which hatred diſſeminates or folly ſcatters; and that whoever aſpires to the notice of the publick, has in almoſt every man an enemy and a rival; and muſt ſtruggle with the oppoſition of the daring, and elude the ſtratagems of the timorous, muſt quicken the frigid and ſoften the obdurate, muſt reclaim perverſeneſs and inform ſtupidity.

It is no wonder that when the proſpect of reward has vaniſhed, the zeal of enterprize ſhould ceaſe; for who would perſevere to cultivate the ſoil which he has, after long labour, diſcovered to be barren? He who hath pleaſed himſelf with anticipated praiſes, and expected that he ſhould meet in every place with patronage or friendſhip, will ſoon remit his vigour, when he finds that from thoſe who deſire to be conſidered as his admirers nothing can be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuſe to own his excellence, leſt they ſhould be too juſtly expected to reward it.

A man, thus cut off from the proſpect of that port to which his addreſs and fortitude had been employed to ſteer him, often abandons himſelf to chance and to the wind, and glides careleſs and idle down the current of life, without reſolution to make another effort, till he is ſwallowed up by the gulph of mortality.

Others are betrayed to the ſame deſertion of themſelves by a contrary fallacy. It was ſaid of *Hannibal* that he wanted nothing to the completion of his

martial

martial virtues, but that when he had gained a victory he ſhould know how to uſe it. The folly of deſiſting too ſoon from ſucceſsful labours, and the haſte of enjoying advantages before they are ſecured, is often fatal to men of impetuous deſire, to men whoſe conſciouſneſs of uncommon powers fills them with preſumption, and who having born oppoſition down before them, and left emulation panting behind, are early perſuaded to imagine that they have reached the heights of perfection, and that now, being no longer in danger from competitors, they may paſs the reſt of their days in the enjoyment of their acquiſitions, in contemplation of their own ſuperiority, and in attention to their own praiſes, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not ſufficiently conſidered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accompliſh, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who ſtops at any point of excellence is every day ſinking in eſtimation, becauſe his improvement grows continually more incommenſurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himſelf, they who have once been juſtly celebrated, imagine that they ſtill have the ſame pretenſions to regard, and ſeldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorſe; for if the ſpendthrift's poverty be embittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how muſt the idler's

obſcurity

obſcurity be clouded by remembering that he once had luſtre!

These errors all ariſe from an original miſtake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praiſes or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applauſe. But the conſideration that life is only depoſited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a maſter who will regard his endeavours, not his ſucceſs, would have preſerved him from trivial elations and diſcouragements, and enabled him to proceed with conſtancy and cheerfulneſs, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by cenſure.

NUMB. 128. SATURDAY, *June* 8, 1751.

Αἰὼν δ' ἀσφαλὴς
Οὐκ ἐγένετ', οὔτ' Αἰακίδᾳ παρὰ Πηλεῖ,
Οὔτε παρ' ἀντιθέῳ
Κάδμῳ· λέγονταί γε μὰν βροτῶν
Ὄλβον ὑπέρτατον οἳ
Σχεῖν. PIND.

For not the brave, or wiſe, or great,
E'er yet had happineſs complete;
Nor *Peleus*, grandſon of the ſky,
Nor *Cadmus*, ſcap'd the ſhafts of pain,
Though favour'd by the Pow'rs on high,
With ev'ry bliſs that man can gain.

THE writers who have undertaken the taſk of reconciling mankind to their preſent ſtate, and relieving the diſcontent produced by the various diſtribution of terreſtrial advantages, frequently remind us that we judge too haſtily of good and evil, that we view only the ſuperficies of life, and determine of the whole by a very ſmall part; and that in the condition of men it frequently happens, that grief and anxiety lie hid under the golden robes of proſperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheered by ſecret radiations of hope and comfort; as in the works of nature the bog is ſometimes covered with flowers, and the mine concealed in the barren crags.

None but thoſe who have learned the art of ſubjecting their ſenſes as well as reaſon to hypothetical ſyſtems, can be perſuaded by the moſt ſpecious rhe-

torician

torician that the lots of life are equal; yet it cannot be denied that every one has his peculiar pleaſures and vexations, that external accidents operate variouſly upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own ſenſations, what another would feel in the ſame circumſtances.

If the general diſpoſition of things be eſtimated by the repreſentation which every one makes of his own ſtate, the world muſt be conſidered as the abode of ſorrow and miſery; for how few can forbear to relate their troubles and diſtreſſes? If we judge by the account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we all are placed in an elyſian region, overſpread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; ſince ſcarcely any complaint is uttered without cenſure from thoſe that hear it, and almoſt all are allowed to have obtained a proviſion at leaſt adequate to their virtue or their underſtanding, to poſſeſs either more than they deſerve, or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with ſuch diſſimilitude of temper and inclination, or receive ſo many of our ideas and opinions from the ſtate of life in which we are engaged, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind ſeem to the other hypocriſy, folly, and affectation. Every claſs of ſociety has its cant of lamentation, which is underſtood or regarded by none but themſelves; and every part of life has its uneaſineſſes, which thoſe who do not feel them will not commiſerate. An event which ſpreads diſtraction over half the commercial world,

aſſembles the trading companies in councils and committees, and ſhakes the nerves of a thouſand ſtockjobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love, which fills the young breaſt with inceſſant alternations of hope and fear, and ſteals away the night and day from every other pleaſure or employment, is regarded by them whoſe paſſions time has extinguiſhed, as an amuſement, which can properly raiſe neither joy nor ſorrow, and, though it may be ſuffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, ſhould always give way to prudence or intereſt.

He that never had any other deſire than to fill a cheſt with money, or to add another manour to his eſtate, who never grieved but at a bad mortgage, or entered a company but to make a bargain, would be aſtoniſhed to hear of beings known among the polite and gay by the denomination of wits. How would he gape with curioſity, or grin with contempt, at the mention of beings who have no wiſh but to ſpeak what was never ſpoken before; who, if they happen to inherit wealth, often exhauſt their patrimonies in treating thoſe who will hear them talk; and if they are poor, neglect opportunities of improving their fortunes for the pleaſure of making others laugh? How ſlowly would he believe that there are men who would rather loſe a legacy than the reputation of a diſtich; who think it leſs diſgrace to want money than repartee; whom the vexation of having been foiled in a conteſt of raillery is ſometimes ſufficient to deprive of ſleep; and who would eſteem it

it a lighter evil to miſs a profitable bargain by ſome accidental delay, than not to have thought of a ſmart reply till the time of producing it was paſt? How little would he ſuſpect that this child of idleneſs and frolick enters every aſſembly with a beating boſom, like a litigant on the day of deciſion, and revolves the probability of applauſe with the anxiety of a conſpirator, whoſe fate depends upon the next night; and at the hour of retirement he carries home, under a ſhow of airy negligence, a heart lacerated with envy, or depreſſed with diſappointment; and immures himſelf in his cloſet, that he may diſencumber his memory at leiſure, review the progreſs of the day, ſtate with accuracy his loſs or gain of reputation, and examine the cauſes of his failure or ſucceſs?

Yet more remote from common conceptions are the numerous and reſtleſs anxieties, by which female happineſs is particularly diſturbed. A ſolitary philoſopher would imagine ladies born with an exemption from care and ſorrow, lulled in perpetual quiet, and feaſted with unmingled pleaſure; for what can interrupt the content of thoſe, upon whom one age has laboured after another to confer honours, and accumulate immunities; thoſe to whom rudeneſs is infamy, and inſult is cowardice; whoſe eye commands the brave, and whoſe ſmiles ſoften the ſevere; whom the ſailor travels to adorn, the ſoldier bleeds to defend, and the poet wears out life to celebrate; who claim tribute from every art and ſcience, and for whom all who approach them endeavour to multiply delights, without requiring from them any return but willingneſs to be pleaſed?

Surely,

Surely, among these favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity must have fixed her residence; they must know only the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys; their life must always move either to the flow or sprightly melody of the lyre of gladness; they can never assemble but to pleasure, or retire but to peace.

Such would be the thoughts of every man who should hover at a distance round the world, and know it only by conjecture and speculation. But experience will soon discover how easily those are disgusted who have been made nice by plenty, and tender by indulgence. He will soon see to how many dangers power is exposed which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how easily that tranquillity is molested which can only be soothed with the songs of flattery. It is impossible to supply wants as fast as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniencies by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are so hard to please, as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves; nor any so readily provoked as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

There are indeed some strokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The mistress of *Catullus* wept for her sparrow many centuries ago, and lapdogs will be sometimes sick in the present age. The most fashionable brocade is subject to stains; a pinner, the pride of *Brussels*, may be torn by a careless washer; a picture may drop from a

watch; or the triumph of a new ſuit may be interrupted on the firſt day of its enjoyment, and all diſtinctions of dreſs unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the ſtate of every age, every ſex, and every condition: all have their cares, either from nature or from folly: and whoever therefore finds himſelf inclined to envy another, ſhould remember that he knows not the real condition which he deſires to obtain, but is certain that by indulging a vicious paſſion, he muſt leſſen that happineſs which he thinks already too ſparingly beſtowed.

NUMB. 129. TUESDAY, *June* 11, 1751.

——Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit,
Materiam, qua ſis ingenioſus, habes.
Poſſidet in terras, et poſſidet æquora Minos:
Nec tellus noſtræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Reſtat iter cœlo: cœlo tentabimus ire.
Da veniam cœpto, Jupiter alte, meo. OVID.

Now *Dædalus*, behold, by fate aſſign'd,
A taſk proportion'd to thy mighty mind!
Unconquer'd bars on earth and ſea withſtand;
Thine, *Minos*, is the main, and thine the land.
The ſkies are open—let us try the ſkies:
Forgive, great *Jove*, the daring enterprize.

MORALISTS, like other writers, inſtead of caſting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endeavouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curioſity with that ſecondary knowledge which books afford, and think themſelves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient ſyſtem, or new illuſtration of eſtabliſhed principles. The ſage precepts of the firſt inſtructors of the world are tranſmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without ſome loſs of their original force at every repercuſſion.

I know not whether any other reaſon than this idleneſs of imitation can be aſſigned for that uniform and conſtant partiality, by which ſome vices have hitherto eſcaped cenſure, and ſome virtues

wanted recommendation; nor can I diſcover why elſe we have been warned only againſt part of our enemies, while the reſt have been ſuffered to ſteal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one ſide been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incurſions of error, and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topicks of moral declamation, may be numbered the miſcarriages of imprudent boldneſs, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philoſopher is crowded with examples of temerity that ſunk under burthens which ſhe laid upon herſelf, and called out enemies to battle by whom ſhe was deſtroyed.

Their remarks are too juſt to be diſputed, and too ſalutary to be rejected; but there is likewiſe ſome danger leſt timorous prudence ſhould be inculcated, till courage and enterprize are wholly repreſſed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorifick wiſdom.

Every man ſhould, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for though we ought not to live only for our own ſakes, and though therefore danger or difficulty ſhould not be avoided merely becauſe we may expoſe ourſelves to miſery or diſgrace; yet it may be juſtly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeleſs deſigns, ſince we might, by a juſt eſtimate of our abilities, become more uſeful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger, which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of ſuicide; there is a ridiculous perſeverance in impracticable ſchemes, which is juſtly puniſhed

with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either ſide of rectitude without ruſhing againſt apparent abſurdity; and according to the inclinations of nature, or the impreſſions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon raſhneſs or cowardice.

That there is a middle path which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimouſly confeſſed: but it is likewiſe acknowledged that this middle path is ſo narrow, that it cannot eaſily be diſcovered, and ſo little beaten, that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed; the care therefore of all thoſe who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they ſhould tend towards the ſide of ſafety.

It can, indeed, raiſe no wonder that temerity has been generally cenſured; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of genius; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderneſs, becauſe it never flatters us by that appearance of ſoftneſs and imbecility which is commonly neceſſary to conciliate compaſſion. But if the ſame attention had been applied to the ſearch of arguments againſt the folly of preſuppoſing impoſſibilities, and anticipating fruſtration, I know not whether many would not have been rouſed to uſefulneſs, who, having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured

ventured to excel, left they ſhould unfortunately fail.

It is neceſſary to diſtinguiſh our own intereſt from that of others, and that diſtinction will perhaps aſſiſt us in fixing the juſt limits of caution and adventurouſneſs. In an undertaking that involves the happineſs or the ſafety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by thoſe who partake the danger; but where only ourſelves can ſuffer by miſcarriage, we are not confined within ſuch narrow limits; and ſtill leſs is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by ſucceſs, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which eaſe is favoured; and as no reſentment is raiſed by general repreſentations of human folly, even in thoſe who are moſt eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confeſs, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakneſs, and therefore frequently preſumes to attempt what he can never accompliſh; but it ought likewiſe to be remembered, that man is no leſs ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accompliſhed a thouſand deſigns, which the prejudices of cowardice reſtrained him from attempting.

It is obſerved in the golden verſes of *Pythagoras*, that *Power is never far from neceſſity*. The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and heſitation, when diffidence is abſorbed in the ſenſe of danger, or over-

overwhelmed by ſome reſiſtleſs paſſion. We then ſoon diſcover, that difficulty is, for the moſt part, the daughter of idleneſs, that the obſtacles with which our way ſeemed to be obſtructed were only phantoms, which we believed real, becauſe we durſt not advance to a cloſe examination; and we learn that it is impoſſible to determine without experience how much conſtancy may endure, or perſeverance perform.

But whatever pleaſure may be found in the review of diſtreſſes when art or courage has ſurmounted them, few will be perſuaded to wiſh that they may be awakened by want or terror to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one ſhould therefore endeavour to invigorate himſelf by reaſon and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have repoſited in him, before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulſion ſhall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reaſonable being to owe that ſtrength to neceſſity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to induſtry than the deſire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away deſpair, cannot be wanting to him who conſiders how much life is now advanced beyond the ſtate of naked, undiſciplined, uninſtructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impoſſible; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not ſome, more daring than the reſt, adventured to bid defiance

defiance to prejudice and cenſure. Nor is there yet any reaſon to doubt that the ſame labour would be rewarded with the ſame ſucceſs. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiſcovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that ſomething may be added by his induſtry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happineſs. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add ſomething, however little, every one may hope; and of every honeſt endeavour, it is certain, that, however unſucceſsful, it will be at laſt rewarded.

NUMB. 130. SATURDAY, *June* 15, 1751.

Non ſic prata novo vere decentia
Æſtatis calidæ diſpoliat vapor,
Sævit ſolſtitio cum medius dies;——
Ut fulgor teneris qui radiat genis
Momentor rapitur, nullaque non dies
Formoſi ſpolium corporis abſtulit.
Res eſt forma fugax. Quis ſapiens bono
Confidat fragili? SENECA.

Not faſter in the ſummer's ray
The ſpring's frail beauty fades away,
Than anguiſh and decay conſume
The ſmiling virgin's roſy bloom.
Some beauty's ſnatch'd each day, each hour;
For beauty is a fleeting flow'r:
Then how can wiſdom e'er confide
In beauty's momentary pride? ELPHINSTON.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU have very lately obſerved that in the numerous ſubdiviſions of the world, every claſs and order of mankind have joys and ſorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain and pleaſure from events which paſs unheeded before other eyes, but can ſcarcely communicate our perceptions to minds preoccupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well-diſpoſed colours or harmonious ſounds can be imparted to ſuch as want the ſenſes of hearing or of ſight.

I am

I am ſo ſtrongly convinced of the juſtneſs of this remark, and have on ſo many occaſions diſcovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which ſhe thinks herſelf not in danger, and indolence liſtens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I queſtion whether you will condeſcend to peruſe my narrative, or without the help of ſome female ſpeculatiſt to be able to underſtand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reaſon I had my regard turned wholly upon myſelf, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praiſe and admiration. My mother, whoſe face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil ſo great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or diſproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an aſſemblage of all that could raiſe envy or deſire, and predicted with triumphant fondneſs the extent of my conqueſts, and the number of my ſlaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face but that her eyes were without luſtre; how another ſtruck the ſight at a diſtance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another diſgraced an elegant ſhape with a brown ſkin; ſome had ſhort fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As ſhe expected no happineſs nor advantage but from beauty, ſhe thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindneſs was chiefly

exerciſed

exercifed in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a fcar, or ftain me with a freckle: fhe never thought me fufficiently fhaded from the fun, or fcreened from the fire. She was fevere or indulgent with no other intention than the prefervation of my form; fhe excufed me from work, left I fhould learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; fhe fnatched away my book, becaufe a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle; but fhe would fcarcely fuffer me to eat, left I fhould fpoil my fhape, nor to walk left I fhould fwell my ancle with a fprain. At night I was accurately furveyed from head to foot, left I fhould have fuffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to fleep, till I had paffed through the cofmetick difcipline, part of which was a regular luftration performed with bean-flower water and May-dews; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by fome of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The foftnefs of my hands was fecured by medicated gloves, and my bofom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to difcufs pimples, and clear difcolorations.

I was always called up early, becaufe the morning air gives a frefhnefs to the cheeks; but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, becaufe the neck is eafily tanned by the rifing fun. I was then dreffed with a thoufand precautions, and again heard my own praifes, and triumphed in the compliments and prognoftications of all that approached me.

My

My mother was not ſo much prepoſſeſſed with an opinion of my natural excellencies as not to think ſome cultivation neceſſary to their completion. She took care that I ſhould want none of the accompliſhments included in female education, or conſidered neceſſary in faſhionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-maſter's ball, and Mr. *Ariet* uſed to reproach his other ſcholars with my performances on the harpſichord. At twelve I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgment.

At laſt the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exerciſes, and qualified to diſplay in the open world thoſe accompliſhments which had yet only been diſcovered in ſelect parties, or domeſtick aſſemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a publick night, which ſhe conſidered as the moſt important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could aſcertain. Every ornament was tried in every poſition, every friend was conſulted about the colour of my dreſs, and the mantuamakers were haraſſed with directions and alterations.

At laſt the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dreſſed and ſent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his firſt ſally. Scholars have told me of a *Spartan* matron, who, when ſhe armed her ſon for battle, bade him bring back his ſhield, or be brought upon it. My venerable parent diſmiſſed me

to

to a field, in her opinion of equal glory, with a command to ſhew that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received like other pleaſing novelties with a tumult of applauſe. Every man who valued himſelf upon the graces of his perſon, or the elegance of his addreſs, crowded about me, and wit and ſplendor contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with inceſſant civilities, which were made more pleaſing by the apparent envy of thoſe whom my preſence expoſed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmoſt wiſhes, and from this time ſtood in the firſt rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to riſe into faſhion, and cenſured by thoſe whom age or diſappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleaſed herſelf with the hopes of ſeeing my exaltation, dreſſed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I repreſented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that ſhe ſhould ſcorn the reptile who could enquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She adviſed me to proſecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deſerve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed ſo numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I ſhould ſeem to give the preference. But having been ſteadily and induſtriouſly inſtructed to preſerve my heart from any impreſſions which might hinder me from conſulting my intereſt, I acted with leſs embarraſſment, becauſe my choice was regulated

by

by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had ſingled out one from the reſt as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my meaſures by the rules of art; and yet when the ardour of the firſt viſits was ſpent, generally found a ſudden declenſion of my influence; I felt in myſelf the want of ſome power to diverſify amuſement, and enliven converſation, and could not but ſuſpect that my mind failed in performing the promiſes of my face. This opinion was ſoon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married *Lavinia* with leſs beauty and fortune than mine, becauſe he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was paſt.

The vanity of my mother would not ſuffer her to diſcover any defect in one that had been formed by her inſtructions, and had all the excellence which ſhe herſelf could boaſt. She told me that nothing ſo much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which generally frightened away thoſe that could make the beſt ſettlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philoſophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obſcurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minuet-ſtep with a new *French* dancing-maſter, and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I had now almoſt completed my nineteenth year: if my charms had loſt any of their ſoftneſs, it was more than compenſated by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was ſupplied by the arts of allurement. I was therefore preparing for a new attack, without any

abatement of my confidence, when, in the midſt of my hopes and ſchemes, I was ſeized by that dreadful malady which has ſo often put a ſudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often fluſhed with tranſport at its own reflexion, and ſaw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praiſes, irrecoverably deſtroyed, I ſunk at once into melancholy and deſpondence. My pain was not much conſoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not loſt my life together with my beauty, and declared, that ſhe thought a young woman diveſted of her charms, had nothing for which thoſe who loved her could deſire to ſave her from the grave.

Having thus continued my relation to the period from which my life took a new courſe, I ſhall conclude it in another letter, if by publiſhing this, you ſhew any regard for the correſpondence of,

S I R, &c.

VICTORIA.

NUMB. 131. TUESDAY, *June* 18, 1751.

——*Fatis accede deiſque,*
Et cole felices; miſeros fuge. Sidera cælo
Ut diſtant, flamma mari, ſic utile recto. LUCAN.

Still follow where auſpicious fates invite;
Careſs the happy, and the wretched ſlight.
Sooner ſhall jarring elements unite,
Than truth with gain, than intereſt with right.
F. LEWIS.

THERE is ſcarcely any ſentiment in which amidſt the innumerable varieties of inclination, that nature or accident have ſcattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring than in the wiſh for riches; a wiſh indeed ſo prevalent that it may be conſidered as univerſal and tranſcendental, as the deſire in which all other deſires are included, and of which the various purpoſes which actuate mankind are only ſubordinate ſpecies and different modifications.

Wealth is the general center of inclination, the point to which all minds preſerve an invariable tendency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberleſs directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate deſign, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquieſce, we ſeldom conſider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth therefore all unanimouſly confeſs the value, nor is there any diſagreement but about the uſe.

No

No deſire can be formed which riches do not aſſiſt to gratify. He that places his happineſs in ſplendid equipage or numerous dependants, in refined praiſe or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curioſities or the revels of luxury, in ſplendid edifices or wide plantations, muſt ſtill either by birth or acquiſition poſſeſs riches. They may be conſidered as the elemental principles of pleaſure, which may be combined with endleſs diverſity; as the eſſential and neceſſary ſubſtance, of which only the form is left to be adjuſted by choice.

The neceſſity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almoſt every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied in arts by which life is furniſhed with accommodations, and which therefore mankind may reaſonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but thoſe who were zealous to deſerve what they were eager to poſſeſs, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the eaſe or happineſs of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the ſame, and ſucceſs might reaſonably have been conſidered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wiſhes of men keep a ſtated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and deſire wealth, who can never procure it by honeſt induſtry or uſeful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which

none,

none, however impotent or worthleſs, will be content to want.

A little enquiry will diſcover that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies of art, or up the ſteeps of labour; what wiſdom and virtue ſcarcely receive at the cloſe of life, as the recompence of long toil and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of ſubtilty and diſhoneſty by more expeditious and compendious meaſures: the wealth of credulity is an open prey to falſehood; and the poſſeſſions of ignorance and imbecility are eaſily ſtolen away by the conveyances of ſecret artifice, or ſeized by the gripe of unreſiſted violence.

It is likewiſe not hard to diſcover that riches always procure protection for themſelves, that they dazzle the eyes of enquiry, divert the celerity of purſuit, or appeaſe the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is inconteſtably known to have large poſſeſſions, very few think it requiſite to enquire by what practices they were obtained; the reſentment of mankind rages only againſt the ſtruggles of feeble and timorous corruption, but when it has ſurmounted the firſt oppoſition, it is afterwards ſupported by favour, and animated by applauſe.

The proſpect of gaining ſpeedily what is ardently deſired, and the certainty of obtaining by every acceſſion of advantage an addition of ſecurity, have ſo far prevailed upon the paſſions of mankind, that the peace of life is deſtroyed by a general and inceſſant ſtruggle for riches. It is obſerved of gold, by an old epigrammatiſt, that *to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in ſorrow.* There is no condition which is not diſquieted either with the care

of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man may be divided in a political eſtimate between thoſe who are practiſing fraud, and thoſe who are repelling it.

If we conſider the preſent ſtate of the world, it will be found, that all confidence is loſt among mankind, that no man ventures to act, where money can be endangered upon the faith of another. It is impoſſible to ſee the long ſcrolls in which every contract is included, with all their appendages of ſeals and atteſtation, without wondering at the depravity of thoſe beings, who muſt be reſtrained from violation of promiſe by ſuch formal and publick evidences, and precluded from equivocation and ſubterfuge by ſuch punctilious minuteneſs. Among all the ſatires to which folly and wickedneſs have given occaſion, none is equally ſevere with a bond or a ſettlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the firſt view irreconcileable with the laws of virtue; ſome are openly flagitious, and practiſed not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and juſtice; and the reſt are on every ſide ſo entangled with dubious tendencies, and ſo beſet with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of thoſe who are not yet abandoned, are able to preſerve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon than that they have deviated from the right leſs than others, and have ſooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteriſticks of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of poſſeſſions:

ſtrife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent paſſion was ſtilled by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but ſuch times can return no more. Community of poſſeſſion muſt include ſpontaneity of production; for what is obtained by labour will be of right the property of him by whoſe labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleaſure or to affluence muſt be procured either by ſlow induſtry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incite to more ſafe and more ſpeedy methods, who ſtrive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to ſhare the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In later ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is expoſed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty; they have ſuppreſſed deſire by cutting off the poſſibility of gratification, and ſecured their peace by deſtroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet ſubjection. But by debarring themſelves from evil, they have reſcinded many opportunities of good; they have too often ſunk into inactivity and uſeleſſneſs; and though they have forborn to injure ſociety, have not fully paid their contributions to its happineſs.

While riches are ſo neceſſary to preſent convenience, and ſo much more eaſily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be ſecured from yielding to the continual impulſe of covetouſneſs by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will turn the intellectual balance, when

weighed only againſt reputation; but will be light and ineffectual when the oppoſite ſcale is charged with juſtice, veracity, and piety.

NUMB. 132. SATURDAY, *June* 22, 1751.

——Dociles imitandis
Turpibus ac pravis omnes ſumus.—— JUV.

The mind of mortals, in perverſeneſs ſtrong,
Imbibes with dire docility the wrong.

To the RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

I WAS bred a ſcholar, and after the uſual courſe of education, found it neceſſary to employ for the ſupport of life that learning which I had almoſt exhauſted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative profeſſions drew my regard with equal attraction; each preſented ideas which excited my curioſity, and each impoſed duties which terrified my apprehenſion.

There is no temper more unpropitious to intereſt than deſultory application and unlimited enquiry, by which the deſires are held in a perpetual equipoiſe, and the mind fluctuates between different purpoſes without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which I divided my time as caprice or accident directed. I often ſpent the firſt hours of the day, in conſidering to what ſtudy I ſhould

ſhould devote the reſt; and at laſt ſnatched up any author that lay upon the table, or perhaps fled to a coffee-houſe for deliverance from the anxiety of irreſolution, and the gloomineſs of ſolitude.

Thus my little patrimony grew imperceptibly leſs, till I was rouſed from my literary ſlumber by a creditor, whoſe importunity obliged me to pacify him with ſo large a ſum, that what remained was not ſufficient to ſupport me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice, if I acknowledge that I now thought myſelf in danger of diſtreſs, and obliged to endeavour after ſome certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their laſt acre in a drawer, and, without the leaſt interruption of their tranquillity, or abatement of their expences, taken out one piece after another, till there was no more remaining. But I was not born to ſuch dignity of imprudence, or ſuch exaltation above the cares and neceſſities of life: I therefore immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might ſet me free from the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out ſome final ſcheme of laſting advantage.

My friends were ſtruck with honeſt ſolicitude, and immediately promiſed their endeavours for my extrication. They did not ſuffer their kindneſs to languiſh by delay, but proſecuted their enquiries with ſuch ſucceſs, that in leſs than a month I was perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of proſpects.

I had however no time for long pauſes of conſideration; and therefore ſoon reſolved to accept the

office of inſtructing a young nobleman in the houſe of his father: I went to the ſeat at which the family then happened to reſide, was received with great politeneſs, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were ſuch as I ſhould willingly have accepted, though my fortune had allowed me greater liberty of choice: the reſpect with which I was treated flattered my vanity; and perhaps the ſplendor of the apartments, and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the propoſals, and received the young lord into my care.

Having no deſire to gain more than I ſhould truly deſerve, I very diligently proſecuted my undertaking, and had the ſatisfaction of diſcovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehenſion, and a retentive memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wiſe and uſeful counſellor to the ſtate, though my labours were ſomewhat obſtructed by want of authority, and the neceſſity of complying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man, whoſe imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a ſtudious life had made all the common amuſements inſipid and contemptible, it was not very eaſy to ſuppreſs his indignation, when he ſaw himſelf forſaken in the midſt of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch an inſect, and found his inſtructions debarred from acceſs to the intellectual faculties, by the memory of a childiſh frolick, or the deſire of a new plaything.

Thoſe vexations would have recurred leſs frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he ſhould be excuſed from a taſk as a reward for ſome petty compliance, and withholding him from his book at another, to gratify herſelf or her viſitants with his vivacity, ſhewn him that every thing was more pleaſing and more important than knowledge, and that ſtudy was to be endured rather than choſen, and was only the buſineſs of thoſe hours which pleaſure left vacant, or diſcipline uſurped.

I thought it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of theſe frequent avocations; but was anſwered, that rank and fortune might reaſonably hope for ſome indulgence; that the retardation of my pupil's progreſs would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine; and that with the ſucceſs which ſatisfied every body elſe, I might ſurely ſatisfy myſelf. I had now done my duty, and without more remonſtrances continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they could be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that by degrees my ſcholar began to feel the quick impulſes of curioſity, and the honeſt ardour of ſtudious ambition.

At length it was reſolved to paſs a winter in *London*. The lady had too much fondneſs for her ſon to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuſe her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him to the publick. I remonſtrated againſt too early an acquaintance with cards and company; but with a ſoft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, ſhe ſaid that he had been already confined too long to ſolitary ſtudy, and it was now time to ſhew him the world; nothing was

more a brand of meanneſs than baſhful timidity; gay freedom and elegant aſſurance were only to be gained by mixed converſation, a frequent intercourſe with ſtrangers, and a timely introduction to ſplendid aſſemblies; and ſhe had more than once obſerved, that his forwardneſs and complaiſance began to deſert him, that he was ſilent when he had not ſomething of conſequence to ſay, bluſhed whenever he happened to find himſelf miſtaken, and hung down his head in the preſence of the ladies without the readineſs of reply, and activity of officiouſneſs remarkable in young gentlemen that are bred in *London*.

Again I found reſiſtance hopeleſs, and again thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the gayeſt and moſt magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for ſeveral years lived at a remote ſeat, was immediately dazzled with a thouſand beams of novelty and ſhow. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleaſure that paſſed before him, and it was impoſſible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the ſounds which echoed from the doors in the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was diſturbed by a rich ſuit, in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and which, having been long accuſtomed to a plain dreſs, he could not at firſt ſurvey without ecſtacy.

The arrival of the family was now formally notified; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more diſtant acquaintances to the door; and my pupil was indiſcriminately introduced to all, that he

might

might accuſtom himſelf to change of faces, and be rid with ſpeed of his ruſtick diffidence. He ſoon endeared himſelf to his mother by the ſpeedy acquiſition or recovery of her darling qualities; his eyes ſparkle at a numerous aſſembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the infection of high life, and has no other teſt of principles or actions than the quality of thoſe to whom they are aſcribed. He begins already to look down on me with ſuperiority, and ſubmits to one ſhort leſſon in a week, as an act of condeſcenſion rather than obedience; for he is of opinion, that no tutor is properly qualified who cannot ſpeak *French*; and having formerly learned a few familiar phraſes from his ſiſter's governeſs, he is every day ſoliciting his mamma to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his converſation. I am not yet inſulted, but find myſelf likely to become ſoon a ſuperfluous incumbrance, for my ſcholar has now no time for ſcience, or for virtue: and the lady yeſterday declared him ſo much the favourite of every company, that ſhe was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

NUMB. 133. TUESDAY, *June* 25, 1751.

Magna quidem ſacris quæ dat præcepta libellis
Victrix fortunæ ſapientia. Dicimus autem
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitæ,
Nec jactare jugum vitâ didicere magiſtrâ. JUV.

Let Stoicks ethicks haughty rules advance
To combat fortune, and to conquer chance:
Yet happy thoſe, though not ſo learn'd are thought,
Whom life inſtructs, who by experience taught,
For new to come from paſt misfortunes look,
Nor ſhake the yoke, which galls the more 'tis ſhook.
CREECH.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU have ſhewn, by the publication of my letter, that you think the life of *Victoria* not wholly unworthy of the notice of a philoſopher: I ſhall therefore continue my narrative, without any apology for unimportance which you have dignified, or for inaccuracies which you are to correct.

When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my ſtrength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother diſmiſſed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expoſe my face too ſoon to the ſun or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The proſpect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had ſo long been accuſ-

accuſtomed to praiſe and ecſtacy; but it was ſome ſatisfaction to be ſeparated from my mother, who was inceſſantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolance, or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condeſcended to viſit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thouſand trifling enquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, ſhe generally concluded with a ſigh, that I ſhould never more be fit to be ſeen.

At laſt I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition; for I was impriſoned in my chamber as a criminal, whoſe appearance would diſgrace my friends, and condemned to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiouſneſs of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the ſcars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former ſmoothneſs; and ſometimes I was puniſhed with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new ſkin. The coſmetick ſcience was exhauſted upon me; but who can repair the ruins of nature? My mother was forced to give me reſt at laſt, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toaſt, whoſe fortune ſhe conſidered as a hopeleſs game, no longer worthy of ſolicitude or attention.

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The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the fudden blaft of difeafe wrinkles in her bloom, is indeed fufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity; all that filled her days with pleafure, and her nights with hope; all that gave gladnefs to the prefent hour, or brightened her profpects of futurity. It is perhaps not in the power of a man whofe attention has been divided by diverfity of purfuits, and who has not been accuftomed to derive from others much of his happinefs, to image to himfelf fuch helplefs deftitution, fuch difmal inanity. Every object of pleafing contemplation is at once fnatched away, and the foul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent defire; the faculties of anticipation flumber in defpondency, or the powers of pleafure mutiny for employment.

I was fo little able to find entertainment for myfelf, that I was forced in a fhort time to venture abroad, as the folitary favage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of difgrace into affemblies, where I had lately fparkled with gaiety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had mifreprefented me to myfelf, and that the remains of my former face might yet have fome attraction and influence: but the firft circle of vifits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that life and death

were

were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practiſe the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition; to receive the tribute of ſighs and praiſes, or be ſoothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my propoſals were unregarded; the narrowneſs of my knowledge, and the meanneſs of my ſentiments were eaſily diſcovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged againſt the judgment; and it was obſerved, by thoſe who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my underſtanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is ſcarcely to be imagined how ſoon the mind ſinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long conſidered all who approached me as vaſſals condemned to regulate their pleaſures by my eyes, and haraſs their inventions for my entertainment, was in leſs than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with profeſſions of obligation; to catch with eagerneſs at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiouſneſs of dependance, leſt any little civility that was paid me ſhould paſs unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleaſing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more ſupportable than the inſolence of my own ſex. For the firſt ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a ſingle houſe in which the memory of my downfal was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my eſcape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by ſome I have been told in expreſs terms, that

that I am not yet without my charms; others have whiſpered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a waſh that would ſmooth the ſkin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some ſoothed me with the obſervation that none can tell how ſoon my caſe may be her own; and ſome thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderneſs, formal condolance, and conſolatory blandiſhments.

Thus was I every day haraſſed with all the ſtratagems of well-bred malignity; yet inſolence was more tolerable than ſolitude, and I therefore perſiſted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of reſentment or depreſſion. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their ſuperiority would end with its novelty; and that I ſhould be ſuffered to glide along in my preſent form among the nameleſs multitude, whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of reſiſtance and effort of perſeverance, I found more ſenſibly the want of thoſe entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day roſe upon me without an engagement; and the evening cloſed in its natural gloom, without ſummoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amuſements for me, and I had no power of amuſing myſelf. Idleneſs expoſed me to melancholy, and life began to languiſh in motionleſs indifference.

Miſery

Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to *Euphemia*, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart than receive assistance. "We must distinguish, said she, my *Victoria*, those evils which "are imposed by providence, from those to which "we ourselves give the power of hurting us. Of "your calamity, a small part is the infliction of "Heaven, the rest is little more than the corrosion "of idle discontent. You have lost that which may "indeed sometimes contribute to happiness, but to "which happiness is by no means inseparably annexed. You have lost what the greater number of "the human race never have possessed; what those "on whom it is bestowed for the most part possess "in vain; and what you, while it was yours, knew "not how to use: you have only lost early what "the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and "have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and "while you have time to substitute more valuable "and more durable excellencies. Consider yourself, "my *Victoria*, as a being born to know, to reason, "and to act; rise at once from your dream of melancholy to wisdom and to piety; you will find "that there are other charms than those of beauty, "and other joys than the praise of fools."

I am, SIR, &c.

VICTORIA.

NUMB. 134. SATURDAY, *June* 29, 1751.

Quis ſcit, an adjiciant hodiernæ craſtina ſummæ
Tempora Dî ſuperi! HOR.

Who knows if Heav'n, with ever-bounteous pow'r,
Shall add to-morrow to the preſent hour? FRANCIS.

I SAT yeſterday morning employed in deliberating on which, among the various ſubjects that occurred to my imagination, I ſhould beſtow the paper of to-day. After a ſhort effort of meditation by which nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irreſolute, my ideas wandered from the firſt intention, and I rather wiſhed to think, than thought, upon any ſettled ſubject; till at laſt I was awakened from this dream of ſtudy by a ſummons from the preſs: the time was come for which I had been thus negligently purpoſing to provide, and, however dubious or ſluggiſh, I was now neceſſitated to write.

Though to a writer whoſe deſign is ſo comprehenſive and miſcellaneous, that he may accommodate himſelf with a topick from every ſcene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his taſk to be obliged to a ſudden compoſition; yet I could not forbear to reproach myſelf for having ſo long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleneſs increaſed the difficulty. There was however ſome pleaſure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was neceſ-
ſary,

ſary, might ſtill congratulate myſelf upon my ſuperiority to multitudes, who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or reſolution recover the opportunities which have ſlipped away; and who are condemned by their own careleſneſs to hopeleſs calamity and barren ſorrow.

The folly of allowing ourſelves to delay what we know cannot be finally eſcaped, is one of the general weakneſſes, which, in ſpite of the inſtruction of moraliſts, and the remonſtrances of reaſon, prevail to a greater or leſs degree in every mind: even they who moſt ſteadily withſtand it, find it, if not the moſt violent, the moſt pertinacious of their paſſions, always renewing its attacks, and though often vanquiſhed, never deſtroyed.

It is indeed natural to have particular regard to the time preſent, and to be moſt ſolicitous for that which is by its nearneſs enabled to make the ſtrongeſt impreſſions. When therefore any ſharp pain is to be ſuffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can ſcarcely exempt ourſelves wholly from the ſeducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring ſome ſupport or advantage which we now want; and are eaſily perſuaded, that the moment of neceſſity which we deſire never to arrive, is at a great diſtance from us.

Thus life is languiſhed away in the gloom of anxiety, and conſumed in collecting reſolution which the next morning diſſipates; in forming purpoſes which we ſcarcely hope to keep, and reconciling ourſelves to our own cowardice by excuſes, which, while we admit them, we know to be abſurd. Our

firmneſs is by the continual contemplation of miſery hourly impaired; every ſubmiſſion to our fear enlarges its dominion; we not only waſte that time in which the evil we dread might have been ſuffered and ſurmounted, but even where procraſtination produces no abſolute increaſe of our difficulties, make them leſs ſuperable to ourſelves by habitual terrors. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wiſe to contract the interval of expectation; to meet the miſchiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and ſuffer only their real malignity without the conflicts of doubt and anguiſh of anticipation.

To act is far eaſier than to ſuffer; yet we every day ſee the progreſs of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleneſs hinders them from enjoying. The caſe of *Tantalus*, in the region of poetick puniſhment, was ſomewhat to be pitied, becauſe the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderneſs can be claimed by thoſe who, though perhaps they ſuffer the pains of *Tantalus*, will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneaſineſs which only vacancy and ſuſpicion expoſe them to feel, and complaints of diſtreſſes which it is in their own power to remove. Lazineſs is commonly aſſociated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infuſing deſpair of ſucceſs; or the frequent failure of irreſolute ſtruggles, and the conſtant deſire of avoiding labour, impreſs

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by degrees falſe terrors on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full poſſeſſion of the fancy, never fails to employ it upon viſions of calamity, ſuch as, if they are not diſſipated by uſeful employment, will ſoon overcaſt it with horrors, and imbitter life not only with thoſe miſeries by which all earthly beings are really more or leſs tormented, but with thoſe which do not yet exiſt, and which can only be diſcerned by the perſpicacity of cowardice.

Among all who ſacrifice future advantage to preſent inclination, ſcarcely any gain ſo little as thoſe that ſuffer themſelves to freeze in idleneſs. Others are corrupted by ſome enjoyment of more or leſs power to gratify the paſſions; but to neglect our duties, merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is ſurely to ſink under weak temptations. Idleneſs never can ſecure tranquillity; the call of reaſon and of conſcience will pierce the cloſeſt pavilion of the ſluggard, and, though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from ſleep. Thoſe moments which he cannot reſolve to make uſeful by devoting them to the great buſineſs of his being, will ſtill be uſurped by powers that will not leave them to his diſpoſal; remorſe and vexation will ſeize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is ſo deſirous to appropriate.

There are other cauſes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute diſcernment. He to whom many objects of purſuit ariſe at the ſame time, will frequently heſitate between different

desires, till a rival has precluded him, or change his course as new attractions prevail, and harass himself without advancing. He who sees different ways to the same end, will, unless he watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities, and the adjustment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road, till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage, and possibilities of improvement, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He that resolves to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, must waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He that hopes in the same house to obtain every convenience, may draw plans and study *Palladio*, but will never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependent and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has abilities to conceive perfection, will not easily be content without it; and since perfection cannot be reached, will lose the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

The certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much ſhorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active proſecution of whatever he is deſirous to perform. It is true, that no diligence can aſcertain ſucceſs; death may intercept the ſwifteſt career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honeſt undertaking, has at leaſt the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he miſſed the victory.

NUMB. 135. TUESDAY, *July* 2, 1751.

Cœlum, non animum mutant. HOR.

Place may be chang'd; but who can change his mind?

IT is impoſſible to take a view on any ſide, or obſerve any of the various claſſes that form the great community of the world, without diſcovering the influence of example; and admitting with new conviction the obſervation of *Ariſtotle*, that *man is an imitative being*. The greater, far the greater number follow the track which others have beaten, without any curioſity after new diſcoveries, or ambition of truſting themſelves to their own conduct. And, of thoſe who break the ranks and diſorder the uniformity of the march, moſt return in a ſhort time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and ſteady ſatisfaction of ſecurity before the frolicks of caprice and the honours of adventure.

In queſtions difficult or dangerous it is indeed natural to repoſe upon authority, and, when fear hap-

pens to predominate, upon the authority of thofe whom we do not in general think wifer than ourfelves. Very few have abilities requifite for the difcovery of abftrufe truth; and of thofe few fome want leifure, and fome refolution. But it is not fo eafy to find the reafon of the univerfal fubmiffion to precedent where every man might fafely judge for himfelf; where no irreparable lofs can be hazarded, nor any mifchief of long continuance incurred. Vanity might be expected to operate where the more powerful paffions are not awakened; the mere pleafure of acknowledging no fuperior might produce flight fingularities, or the hope of gaining fome new degree of happinefs awaken the mind to invention or experiment.

If in any cafe the fhackles of prefcription could be wholly fhaken off, and the imagination left to act without controul, on what occafion fhould it be expected, but in the felection of lawful pleafure? Pleafure, of which the effence is choice; which compulfion diffociates from every thing to which nature has united it; and which owes not only its vigour but its being to the fmiles of liberty. Yet we fee that the fenfes, as well as the reafon, are regulated by credulity; and that moft will feel, or fay that they feel, the gratifications which others have taught them to expect.

At this time of univerfal migration, when almoft every one, confiderable enough to attract regard, has retired, or is preparing with all the earneftnefs of diftrefs to retire, into the country; when nothing is to be heard but the hopes of fpeedy departure, or the complaints of involuntary delay; I have often been tempted

tempted to enquire what happineſs is to be gained, or what inconvenience to be avoided, by this ſtated receſſion? Of the birds of paſſage, ſome follow the ſummer, and ſome the winter, becauſe they live upon ſuſtenance which only ſummer or winter can ſupply; but of the annual flight of human rovers it is much harder to aſſign the reaſon, becauſe they do not appear either to find or ſeek any thing which is not equally afforded by the town and country.

I believe that many of theſe fugitives may have heard of men whoſe continual wiſh was for the quiet of retirement, who watched every opportunity to ſteal away from obſervation, to forſake the crowd, and delight themſelves with *the ſociety of ſolitude*. There is indeed ſcarcely any writer who has not celebrated the happineſs of rural privacy, and delighted himſelf and his reader with the melody of birds, the whiſper of groves, and the murmur of rivulets; nor any man eminent for extent of capacity, or greatneſs of exploits, that has not left behind him ſome memorials of lonely wiſdom, and ſilent dignity.

But almoſt all abſurdity of conduct ariſes from the imitation of thoſe whom we cannot reſemble. Thoſe who thus teſtified their wearineſs of tumult and hurry, and haſted with ſo much eagerneſs to the leiſure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the preſſure of difficult employments, haraſſed with importunities, and diſtracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engroſſed by ſpeculative ſciences, who having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their ſearches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reaſonings disjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reaſon-

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ably fly to that eafe and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The ftatefman who devoted the greater part of his time to the publick, was defirous of keeping the remainder in his own power. The general ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours, and ftunned with acclamations, gladly fnatched an interval of filence and relaxation. The naturalift was unhappy where the works of Providence were not always before him. The reafoner could adjuft his fyftems only where his mind was free from the intrufion of outward objects.

Such examples of folitude very few of thofe who are now haftening from the town, have any pretenfions to plead in their own juftification, fince they cannot pretend either wearinefs of labour, or defire of knowledge. They purpofe nothing more than to quit one fcene of idlenefs for another, and after having trifled in publick, to fleep in fecrecy. The utmoft that they can hope to gain is the change of ridiculoufnefs to obfcurity, and the privilege of having fewer witneffes to a life of folly. He who is not fufficiently important to be difturbed in his purfuits, but fpends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill either with enjoyment or defires, can have nothing to demand of fhades and valleys. As bravery is faid to be a panoply, infignificancy is always a fhelter.

There are however pleafures and advantages in a rural fituation, which are not confined to philofophers and heroes. The frefhnefs of the air, the verdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, and the unexhaufted variety which fummer fcatters upon the earth,

earth, may eaſily give delight to an unlearned ſpectator. It is not neceſſary that he who looks with pleaſure on the colours of a flower ſhould ſtudy the principles of vegetation, or that the *Ptolemaick* and *Copernican* ſyſtem ſhould be compared before the light of the ſun can gladden, or its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itſelf a ſource of gratification; and *Milton* juſtly obſerves, that to him who has been long pent up in cities no rural object can be preſented, which will not delight or refreſh ſome of his ſenſes.

Yet even theſe eaſy pleaſures are miſſed by the greater part of thoſe who waſte their ſummer in the country. Should any man purſue his acquaintances to their retreats, he would find few of them liſtening to *Philomel*, loitering in woods, or plucking daiſies, catching the healthy gale of the morning, or watching the gentle coruſcations of declining day. Some will be diſcovered at a window by the road ſide, rejoicing when a new cloud of duſt gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary ſupply of converſation, and a ſhort relief from the tedioufneſs of unideal vacancy. Others are placed in the adjacent villages, where they look only upon houſes as in the reſt of the year, with no change of objects but what a remove to any new ſtreet in *London* might have given them. The ſame ſet of acquaintances ſtill ſettle together, and the form of life is not otherwiſe diverſified than by doing the ſame things in a different place. They pay and receive viſits in the uſual form, they frequent the walks in the morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the ſame tattle, and dance with the ſame partners; nor can they at their return to their former habitation congratulate

themſelves

themſelves on any other advantage, than that they have paſſed their time like others of the ſame rank; and have the ſame right to talk of the happineſs and beauty of the country, of happineſs which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments, and to ſubſiſt upon its own ſtock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are indeed underſtandings ſo fertile and comprehenſive, that they can always feed reflection with new ſupplies, and ſuffer nothing from the precluſion of adventitious amuſements; as ſome cities have within their own walls encloſed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a ſiege. But others live only from day to day, and muſt be conſtantly enabled, by foreign ſupplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and ſtupidity. Such could not indeed be blamed for hovering within reach of their uſual pleaſure, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element, were not their faculties contracted by their own fault. But let not thoſe who go into the country, merely becauſe they dare not be left alone at home, boaſt their love of nature, or their qualifications for ſolitude; nor pretend that they receive inſtantaneous infuſions of wiſdom from the *Dryads*, and are able, when they leave ſmoke and noiſe behind, to act, or think, or reaſon for themſelves.

NUMB. 136. SATURDAY, *July* 6, 1751.

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεῖνος ὁμῶς ἀΐδαο πύλησιν,
Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζει. HOMER.

Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart deteſts him as the gates of *Hell*. POPE.

THE regard which they whoſe abilities are employed in the works of imagination claim from the reſt of mankind, ariſes in a great meaſure from their influence on futurity. Rank may be conferred by princes, and wealth bequeathed by miſers or by robbers; but the honours of a laſting name, and the veneration of diſtant ages, only the ſons of learning have the power of beſtowing. While therefore it continues one of the charaćteriſticks of rational nature to decline oblivion, authors never can be wholly overlooked in the ſearch after happineſs, nor become contemptible but by their own fault.

The man who conſiders himſelf as conſtituted the ultimate judge of diſputable charaćters, and entruſted with the diſtribution of the laſt terreſtrial rewards of merit, ought to ſummon all his fortitude to the ſupport of his integrity, and reſolve to diſcharge an office of ſuch dignity with the moſt vigilant caution and ſcrupulous juſtice. To deliver examples to poſterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no ſlight or trivial undertaking; nor is it eaſy to commit more atrocious treaſon againſt the great republick of humanity, than by falſifying its records and miſguiding its decrees.

To

To ſcatter praiſe or blame without regard to juſtice, is to deſtroy the diſtinction of good and evil. Many have no other teſt of actions than general opinion; and all are ſo far influenced by a ſenſe of reputation, that they are often reſtrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have loſt their power; nor can any ſpecies of proſtitution promote general depravity more than that which deſtroys the force of praiſe, by ſhewing that it may be acquired without deſerving it, and which, by ſetting free the active and ambitious from the dread of infamy, lets looſe the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatneſs is controlled.

Praiſe, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its ſcarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raiſe expectation, or animate enterprize. It is therefore not only neceſſary, that wickedneſs, even when it is not ſafe to cenſure it, be denied applauſe, but that goodneſs be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands, due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not ſuffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boaſt only petty ſervices and eaſy virtues.

Had theſe maxims been univerſally received, how much would have been added to the taſk of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhauſted. How few of theſe initial panegyricks had appeared, if the author had been obliged firſt to find a man of virtue, then to diſtinguiſh the diſtinct ſpecies and degree of his deſert, and at laſt to pay him only the honours which he might juſtly claim. It is much eaſier to learn the

name of the laſt man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain by the intervention of ſome of his domeſticks the privilege of addreſſing him, or in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an addreſs without any previous ſolicitation; and after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philoſophy has aſſigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly ſaid, did not the fear of giving pain to his modeſty repreſs the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

Nothing has ſo much degraded literature from its natural rank, as the practice of indecent and promiſcuous dedication; for what credit can he expect who profeſſes himſelf the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and without ſhame or ſcruple celebrates the worthleſs, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppreſſive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth, and lovelineſs to innocence? Every other kind of adulteration, however ſhameful, however miſchievous, is leſs deteſtable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the ſtamp of literary ſanction upon the droſs and refuſe of the world.

Yet I would not overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the greater part, ought to fall upon their patrons. If he that hires a bravo, partakes the guilt of murder, why ſhould he who bribes a flatterer, hope to be exempted from the ſhame of falſehood? The unhappy dedicator is ſeldom without ſome motives which obſtruct, though not deſtroy, the liberty of choice; he is oppreſſed by miſeries which he hopes to relieve,

or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a short gratification, with which nothing but stupidity could dispose him to be pleased. The real satisfaction which praise can afford is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by shewing us that we have not endeavoured to deserve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, satire and reproach; the celebration of those virtues which we feel ourselves to want, can only impress a quicker sense of our own defects, and shew that we have not yet satisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to observe how much fiction must contribute to the completion of our character.

Yet sometimes the patron may claim indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiast has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapless author, when his book, and perhaps his dedication, was ready for the press, has waited long before any one would pay the price of prostitution, or consent to hear the praises destined to insure his name against the casualties of time; and many a complaint has been vented against the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parsimonious prudence has declined expence, or honest indignation rejected falsehood. But if at last, after long enquiry and innumerable disappointments, he find a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and taste, a statesman desirous of knowing how a friendly historian will represent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world some memorial of her wit and beauty, such weakness cannot be censured as an instance of enormous depravity. The wisest man may by a diligent

ligent ſolicitor be ſurpriſed in the hour of weakneſs, and perſuaded to ſolace vexation, or invigorate hope, with the muſick of flattery.

To cenſure all dedications as adulatory and ſervile, would diſcover rather envy than juſtice. Praiſe is the tribute of merit, and he that has inconteſtably diſtinguiſhed himſelf by any publick performance, has a right to all the honours which the publick can beſtow. To men thus raiſed above the reſt of the community, there is no need that the book or its author ſhould have any particular relation: that the patron is known to deſerve reſpect, is ſufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the ſame regard from particular perſons private virtue and leſs conſpicuous excellence may be ſometimes entitled. An author may with great propriety inſcribe his work to him by whoſe encouragement it was undertaken, or by whoſe liberality he has been enabled to proſecute it, and he may juſtly rejoice in his own fortitude that dares to reſcue merit from obſcurity.

Acribus exemplis videor te cludere: miſce
Ergo aliquid noſtris de moribus.——

Thus much I will indulge thee for thy eaſe,
And mingle ſomething of our times to pleaſe.
DRYDEN jun.

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblameably produce a dedication; but let the writer who pours out his praiſes only to propitiate power, or attract the attention of greatneſs, be cautious leſt his deſire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to pleaſe ourſelves with the

the future than the paſt, and while we luxuriate in expectation, may be eaſily perſuaded to purchaſe what we yet rate only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

But no private views or perſonal regard can diſcharge any man from his general obligations to virtue and to truth. It may happen in the various combinations of life, that a good man may receive favours from one, who, notwithſtanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be juſtly propoſed to the imitation of others, and whom therefore he muſt find ſome other way of rewarding than by publick celebrations. Self-love has indeed many powers of ſeducement, but it ſurely ought not to exalt any individual to equality with the collective body of mankind, or perſuade him that a benefit conferred on him is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many upon falſe principles of gratitude have ventured to extol wretches, whom all but their dependents numbered among the reproaches of the ſpecies, and whom they would likewiſe have beheld with the ſame ſcorn had they not been hired to diſhoneſt approbation.

To encourage merit with praiſe is the great buſineſs of literature; but praiſe muſt loſe its influence, by unjuſt or negligent diſtribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with miſapplication of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with ſquandering on guilt the recompence of virtue.

NUMB. 137. TUESDAY, *July* 9, 1751.

Dum vitant ſtulti vitia, in contraria currunt. HOR.

——Whilſt fools one vice condemn,
They run into the oppoſite extreme. CREECH.

THAT wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often obſerved. The awful ſtillneſs of attention, with which the mind is overſpread at the firſt view of an unexpected effect, ceaſes when we have leiſure to diſentangle complications and inveſtigate cauſes. Wonder is a pauſe of reaſon, a ſudden ceſſation of the mental progreſs, which laſts only while the underſtanding is fixed upon ſome ſingle idea, and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the firſt agent to the laſt conſequence.

It may be remarked with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for thoſe who have never accuſtomed themſelves to the labour of enquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conqueſts over difficulty, to ſleep in the gloomy quieſcence of aſtoniſhment, without any effort to animate enquiry or diſpel obſcurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they conſider as too high to be reached, or too extenſive to be comprehended; they therefore content themſelves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hopes of performing, and reſign the pleaſure of rational

rational contemplation to more pertinacious ſtudy or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanick art, many are of a form ſo different from that of their firſt materials, and many conſiſt of parts ſo numerous and ſo nicely adapted to each other, that it is not poſſible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the ſhops of artificers, obſerve the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progreſs of a manufacture through the different hands, that, in ſucceſſion to each other, contribute to its perfection, we ſoon diſcover that every ſingle man has an eaſy taſk, and that the extremes, however remote, of natural rudeneſs and artificial elegance, are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The ſame is the ſtate of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a ſecond view; but if we have ſkill ſufficient to analiſe them into ſimple principles, it will be diſcovered that our fear was groundleſs. *Divide and conquer*, is a principle equally juſt in ſcience as in policy. Complication is a ſpecies of confederacy, which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the moſt active and vigorous intellect; but of which every member is ſeparately weak, and which may therefore be quickly ſubdued if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as *Locke* has obſerved, is to attempt but little at a time. The wideſt excurſions of the mind are made by ſhort flights frequently

quently repeated; the moſt lofty fabricks of ſcience are formed by the continued accumulation of ſingle propoſitions.

It often happens, whatever be the cauſe, that impatience of labour, or dread of miſcarriage, ſeizes thoſe who are moſt diſtinguiſhed for quickneſs of apprehenſion; and that they who might with greateſt reaſon promiſe themſelves victory, are leaſt willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid aſleep by lazineſs, or diſſipated by pleaſures, can ariſe only from confuſed and general views, ſuch as negligence ſnatches in haſte, or from the diſappointment of the firſt hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of ſcience will be pierced by a careleſs glance, or the eminences of fame aſcended without labour, is to expect a particular privilege, a power denied to the reſt of mankind; but to ſuppoſe that the maze is inſcrutable to diligence, or the heights inacceſſible to perſeverance, is to ſubmit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary ſhackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes in literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by diſcovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the ſucceſs of ſuch undertakings perhaps ſome degree of fortuitous happineſs is neceſſary, which no man can promiſe or procure to himſelf; and therefore doubt and irreſolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abyſſes of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing

more is required, than to purſue a path already beaten, and to trample obſtacles which others have demoliſhed, why ſhould any man ſo much diſtruſt his own intellect as to imagine himſelf unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wiſhed that they who devote their lives to ſtudy would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and conſider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to ſcience and to life, and unite ſome knowledge of the preſent world to their acquaintance with paſt ages and remote events.

Nothing has ſo much expoſed men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themſelves. Thoſe who have been taught to conſider the inſtitutions of the ſchools, as giving the laſt perfection to human abilities, are ſurprized to ſee men wrinkled with ſtudy, yet wanting to be inſtructed in the minute circumſtances of propriety, or the neceſſary forms of daily tranſaction; and quickly ſhake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the reſt of mankind.

Books, ſays Bacon, *can never teach the uſe of books*. The ſtudent muſt learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his ſpeculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purpoſes of life.

It is too common for thoſe who have been bred to ſcholaſtick profeſſions, and paſſed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to diſregard every other qualification,

and to imagine that they ſhall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for inſtruction. They therefore ſtep out from their cells into the open world, with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and ſcorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whoſe manners they muſt imitate, and with whoſe opinions they muſt comply, if they deſire to paſs their time happily among them.

To leſſen that diſdain with which ſcholars are inclined to look on the common buſineſs of the world, and the unwillingneſs with which they condeſcend to learn what is not to be found in any ſyſtem of philoſophy, it may be neceſſary to conſider that though admiration is excited by abſtruſe reſearches and remote diſcoveries, yet pleaſure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by ſofter accompliſhments, and qualities more eaſily communicable to thoſe about us. He that can only converſe upon queſtions, about which only a ſmall part of mankind has knowledge ſufficient to make them curious, muſt loſe his days in unſocial ſilence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be uſeful in great occaſions, may die without exerting his abilities, and ſtand a helpleſs ſpectator of a thouſand vexations which fret away happineſs, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readineſs of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to ſet him above the want of hourly aſſiſtance,

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or to extinguiſh the deſire of fond endearments, and tender officiouſneſs; and therefore, no one ſhould think it unneceſſary to learn thoſe arts by which friendſhip may be gained. Kindneſs is preſerved by a conſtant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleaſures; but ſuch benefits only can be beſtowed, as others are capable to receive, and ſuch pleaſures only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this deſcent from the pinnacles of art no honour will be loſt; for the condeſcenſions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things, appears, to uſe the ſimile of *Longinus*, like the ſun in his evening declination, he remits his ſplendor but retains his magnitude, and pleaſes more though he dazzles leſs.

NUMB. 138. SATURDAY, *July* 13, 1751.

——*tecum libeat mihi ſordida rura*
Atque humiles habitare caſas, et figere cervos. VIRG.

With me retire, and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural ſports.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and buſy part of mankind, is juſtified by daily obſervation, ſince moſt of thoſe who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I ſuppoſe you do not intend to repreſent the practice itſelf as ridiculous, or to declare that he whoſe condition puts the diſtribution of his time into his own power may not properly divide it between the town and country.

That the country, and only the country, diſplays the inexhauſtible varieties of nature, and ſupplies the philoſophical mind with matter for admiration and enquiry, never was denied; but my curioſity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an inſect, or the ſtructure of a neſt; I am generally employed upon human manners, and therefore fill up the months of rural leiſure with remarks on thoſe who live within the circle of my notice. If writers would more frequently viſit

those regions of negligence and liberty, they might diversify their representations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute discriminations which distinguish one from another are for the most part effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiscuous converse, as angular bodies and uneven surfaces lose their points and asperities by frequent attrition against one another, and approach by degrees to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of fashion, the influence of example, the desire of applause, and the dread of censure, obstruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in its first efforts to break forth into experiments of caprice.

Few inclinations are so strong as to grow up into habits, when they must struggle with the constant opposition of settled forms and established customs. But in the country every man is a separate and independent being: solitude flatters irregularity with hopes of secrecy: and wealth, removed from the mortification of comparison, and the awe of equality, swells into contemptuous confidence, and sets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulses of nature act unrestrained, and the disposition dares to shew itself in its true form, without any disguise of hypocrisy, or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to please himself, without enquiring how far he deviates from the general practice, or considering others as entitled to any account of his sentiments or actions. If he builds or demolishes,

lifhes, opens or enclofes, deluges or drains, it is not his care what may be the opinion of thofe who are fkilled in perfpective or architecture, it is fufficient that he has no landlord to control him, and that none has any right to examine in what projects the lord of the manor fpends his own money on his own grounds.

For this reafon it is not very common to want fubjects for rural converfation. Almoft every man is daily doing fomething which produces merriment, wonder, or refentment, among his neighbours. This utter exemption from reftraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate in its full extent, and fuffers the natural character to diffufe itfelf to every part of life. The pride which, under the check of publick obfervation, would have been only vented among fervants and domefticks, becomes in a country baronet the torment of a province, and inftead of terminating in the deftruction of China ware and glaffes, ruins tenants, difpoffeffes cottagers, and haraffes villages with actions of trefpafs and bills of indictment.

It frequently happens that even without violent paffions, or enormous corruption, the freedom and laxity of a ruftick life produces remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. In the province where I now refide, we have one lady eminent for wearing a gown always of the fame cut and colour; another for fhaking hands with thofe that vifit her; and a third for unfhaken refolution never to let tea or coffee enter her houfe.

But of all the female characters which this place affords, I have found none fo worthy of attention as that of Mrs. *Bufy*, a widow, who loft her hufband in her thirtieth year, and has fince paffed her time at

the

the manor-houſe, in the government of her children, and the management of the eſtate.

Mrs. *Buſy* was married at eighteen, from a boarding-ſchool, where ſhe had paſſed her time like other young ladies in needle-work, with a few intervals of dancing and reading. When ſhe became a bride ſhe ſpent one winter with her huſband in town, where having no idea of any converſation beyond the formalities of a viſit, ſhe found nothing to engage her paſſions; and when ſhe had been one night at court, and two at an opera, and ſeen the Monument, the Tombs, and the Tower, ſhe concluded that *London* had nothing more to ſhew, and wondered that when women had once ſeen the world they could not be content to ſtay at home. She therefore went willingly to the ancient ſeat, and for ſome years ſtudied houſewifery under Mr. *Buſy*'s mother, with ſo much aſſiduity, that the old lady, when ſhe died, bequeathed her a caudle-cup, a ſoup-diſh, two beakers, and a cheſt of table-linen ſpun by herſelf.

Mr. *Buſy* finding the economical qualities of his lady, reſigned his affairs wholly into her hands, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never viſited his eſtates, but to deſtroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed ſuch devaſtations in the rage of pleaſure, that ſome of his tenants refuſed to hold their lands at the uſual rent. Their landlady perſuaded them to be ſatisfied, and entreated her huſband to diſmiſs his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale drank by his companions, and corn conſumed by the horſes, and remonſtrances againſt the inſolence of the huntſman, and the frauds of the groom. The huntſman was too neceſſary to his happineſs

happineſs to be diſcarded; and he had ſtill continued to ravage his own eſtate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by ſhooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a conſumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

Mrs. *Buſy* was too much an economiſt to feel either joy or ſorrow at his death. She received the compliments and conſolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which ſhe ſtole privately every night and morning to ſee the cows milked; and after a few days declared that ſhe thought a widow might employ herſelf better than in nurſing grief; and that, for her part, ſhe was reſolved that the fortunes of her children ſhould not be impaired by her neglect.

She therefore immediately applied herſelf to the reformation of abuſes. She gave away the dogs, diſcharged the ſervants of the kennel and ſtable, and ſent the horſes to the next fair, but rated at ſo high a price that they returned unſold. She was reſolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be employed in common drudgery. They loſt their ſleekneſs and grace, and were ſoon purchaſed at half the value.

She ſoon diſencumbered herſelf from her weeds, and put on a riding-hood, a coarſe apron, and ſhort petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which ſhe takes the management wholly upon herſelf. She riſes before the ſun to order the horſes to their geers, and ſees them well rubbed down at their return from work; ſhe attends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nurſed; ſhe walks out among

the ſheep at noon, counts the lambs, and obſerves the fences, and, where ſhe finds a gap, ſtops it with a buſh till it can be better mended. In harveſt ſhe rides afield in the waggon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden bottle. At her leiſure hours ſhe looks gooſe eggs, airs the wool room, and turns the cheeſe.

When reſpect or curioſity brings viſitants to her houſe, ſhe entertains them with prognoſticks of a ſcarcity of wheat, or a rot among the ſheep, and always thinks herſelf privileged to diſmiſs them, when ſhe is to ſee the hogs fed, or to count her poultry on the rooſt.

The only things neglected about her are her children, whom ſhe has taught nothing but the loweſt houſehold duties. In my laſt viſit I met miſs *Buſy* carrying grains to a ſick cow, and was entertained with the accompliſhments of her eldeſt ſon, a youth of ſuch early maturity, that though he is only ſixteen, ſhe can truſt him to ſell corn in the market. Her younger daughter, who is eminent for her beauty, though ſomewhat tanned in making hay, was buſy in pouring out ale to the ploughmen, that every one might have an equal ſhare.

I could not but look with pity on this young family, doomed by the abſurd prudence of their mother to ignorance and meanneſs: but when I recommended a more elegant education, was anſwered, that ſhe never ſaw bookiſh or finical people grow rich, and that ſhe was good for nothing herſelf till ſhe had forgotten the nicety of the boarding-ſchool.

I am, Yours, &c.

BUCOLUS.

NUMB. 139. TUESDAY, *July* 16, 1751.

——*Sit quod vis ſimplex duntaxat et unum.* HOR.

Let every piece be ſimple and be one.

IT is required by *Ariſtotle* to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally neceſſary to every other ſpecies of regular compoſition, that it ſhould have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The beginning," ſays he, "is that which hath nothing neceſſarily previous, but to which that which follows is naturally conſequent; the end, on the contrary, is that which by neceſſity, or at leaſt, according to the common courſe of things, ſucceeds ſomething elſe, but which implies nothing conſequent to itſelf; the middle is connected on one ſide to ſomething that naturally goes before, and on the other to ſomething that naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critick, for the diſpoſition of the different parts of a well conſtituted fable. It muſt begin, where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end, where the mind is left in repoſe, without expectation of any farther event. The intermediate paſſages muſt join the laſt effect to the firſt cauſe, by a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothing muſt be therefore inſerted which does not apparently ariſe from ſomething foregoing, and properly make way for ſomething that ſucceeds it.

This precept is to be underſtood in its rigour only with reſpect to great and eſſential events, and cannot be extended in the ſame force to minuter circumſtances and arbitrary decorations, which yet are more happy as they contribute more to the main deſign; for it is always a proof of extenſive thought and accurate circumſpection, to promote various purpoſes by the ſame act; and the idea of an ornament admits uſe, though it ſeems to exclude neceſſity.

Whoever purpoſes, as it is expreſſed by *Milton*, *to build the lofty rhime*, muſt acquaint himſelf with this law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be ſolid as well as beautiful; that nothing ſtand ſingle or independent, ſo as that it may be taken away without injuring the reſt; but that from the foundation to the pinnacles one part reſt firm upon another.

This regular and conſequential diſtribution, is among common authors frequently neglected; but the failures of thoſe, whoſe example can have no influence, may be ſafely overlooked, nor is it of much uſe to recall obſcure and unregarded names to memory for the ſake of ſporting with their infamy. But if there is any writer whoſe genius can embelliſh impropriety, and whoſe authority can make error venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquiſition. To expunge faults where there are no excellencies, is a taſk equally uſeleſs with that of the chemiſt, who employs the arts of ſeparation and refinement upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operations.

The

The tragedy of *Samſon Agoniſtes* has been celebrated as the ſecond work of the great author of *Paradiſe Loſt*, and oppoſed with all the confidence of triumph to the dramatick performances of other nations. It contains indeed juſt ſentiments, maxims of wiſdom, and oracles of piety, and many paſſages written with the ancient ſpirit of choral poetry, in which there is a juſt and pleaſing mixture of *Seneca*'s moral declamation, with the wild enthuſiaſm of the *Greek* writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is compoſed according to the indiſpenſable laws of *Ariſtotelian* criticiſm: and, omitting at preſent all other conſiderations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptneſs, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts neceſſary to be known.

Samſon. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To theſe dark ſteps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of ſun and ſhade;
There I am wont to ſit when any chance
Relieves me from my taſk of ſervile toil,
Daily in the common priſon elſe enjoin'd me.—
—O wherefore was my birth from heav'n foretold
Twice by an angel?——
—Why was my breeding order'd and preſcrib'd,
As of a perſon ſeparate to God,
Deſign'd for great exploits; if I muſt die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out?
—Whom have I to complain of but myſelf?
Who this high gift of ſtrength, committed to me,

In what part lodg'd, how eaſily bereft me,
Under the ſeat of ſilence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman muſt reveal it.

His ſoliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miſeries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a ſolemn vindication of divine juſtice. So that at the concluſion of the firſt act there is no deſign laid, no diſcovery made, nor any diſpoſition formed towards the ſubſequent event.

In the ſecond act, *Manoah*, the father of *Samſon*, comes to ſeek his ſon, and, being ſhewn him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his miſery, and compariſons of his preſent with his former ſtate, repreſenting to him the ignominy which his religion ſuffers, by the feſtival this day celebrated in honour of *Dagon*, to whom the idolaters aſcribed his overthrow.

——Thou bear'ſt
Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
Bitterly haſt thou paid and ſtill art paying
That rigid ſcore. A worſe thing yet remains,
This day the *Philiſtines* a pop'lar feaſt
Here celebrate in *Gaza*; and proclaim
Great pomp and ſacrifice, and praiſes loud
To *Dagon*, as their God, who hath deliver'd
Thee, *Samſon*, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who ſlew'ſt them many a ſlain.

Samſon, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father conſiders as the effuſion of prophetick confidence.

Samſon.

Samson. ——— God be ſure,
Will not connive or linger thus provok'd,
But will ariſe and his great name aſſert:
Dagon muſt ſtoop, and ſhall ere long receive
Such a diſcomfit, as ſhall quite deſpoil him
Of all theſe boaſted trophies won on me.

Manoah. With cauſe this hope relieves thee, and theſe words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exaſperate *Samſon*, cannot, I think, be cenſured as wholly ſuperfluous; but the ſucceeding diſpute, in which *Samſon* contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to ſolicit his releaſe, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of *Dalilah*, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and inſtructive, from which ſhe retires, after ſhe has exhauſted her perſuaſions, and is no more ſeen nor heard of; nor has her viſit any effect but that of raiſing the character of *Samſon*.

In the fourth act enters *Harapha*, the giant of *Gath*, whoſe name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming, than to ſee the man whoſe ſtrength and actions are ſo loudly celebrated:

Haraph. ——Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd
Incredible to me; in this diſpleas'd,
That I was never preſent in the place
Of thoſe encounters, where we might have tried
Each others force in camp or liſted fields:
And now am come to ſee of whom ſuch noiſe
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to ſurvey,
If thy appearance anſwer loud report.

Samſon challenges him to the combat; and, after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one ſide, and imbittered by contemptuous inſults on the other, *Harapha* retires; we then hear it determined, by *Samſon* and the chorus, that no conſequence good or bad will proceed from their interview:

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counſel ſtir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.

Samſ. He muſt allege ſome cauſe, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, leſt a queſtion riſe,
Whether he durſt accept the offer or not;
And that he durſt not, plain enough appear'd.

At laſt, in the fifth act, appears a meſſenger from the lords aſſembled at the feſtival of *Dagon*, with a ſummons by which *Samſon* is required to come and entertain them with ſome proof of his ſtrength. *Samſon*, after a ſhort expoſtulation, diſmiſſes him with a firm and reſolute refuſal; but during the abſence of the meſſenger, having a while defended the propriety of his conduct, he at laſt declares

clares himſelf moved by a ſecret impulſe to comply, and utters ſome dark preſages of a great event to be brought to paſs by his agency, under the direction of Providence:

Samſ. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rouſing motions in me, which diſpoſe
To ſomething extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this meſſenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be ſure, that may diſhonour
Our law, or ſtain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be ought of preſage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By ſome great act, or of my days the laſt.

While *Samſon* is conducted off by the meſſenger, his father returns with hopes of ſucceſs in his ſolicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, firſt by a ſhout of triumph, and afterwards by ſcreams of horror and agony. As they ſtand deliberating where they ſhall be ſecure, a man who had been preſent at the ſhow enters, and relates how *Samſon*, having prevailed on his guide to ſuffer him to lean againſt the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the ſpectators and himſelf:

——Thoſe two maſſy pillars,
With horrible confuſion, to and fro,
He tugg'd, he ſhook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them, with burſt of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who ſat beneath——
——*Samſon* with theſe immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the ſame deſtruction on himſelf.

 This

This is undoubtedly a juſt and regular cataſtrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end which *Ariſtotle* himſelf could not have diſapproved; but it muſt be allowed to want a middle, ſince nothing paſſes between the firſt act and the laſt, that either haſtens or delays the death of *Samſon*. The whole drama, if its ſuperfluities were cut off, would ſcarcely fill a ſingle act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

NUMB. 140. SATURDAY, *July* 20, 1751.

——*Quis tam* Lucili *fautor inepte eſt,*
Ut non hoc fateatur. HOR.

What doating bigot, to his faults ſo blind,
As not to grant me this, can *Milton* find?

IT is common, ſays *Bacon*, to deſire the end without enduring the means. Every member of ſociety feels and acknowledges the neceſſity of detecting crimes, yet ſcarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to ſecure an informer from publick hatred. The learned world has always admitted the uſefulneſs of critical diſquiſitions, yet he that attempts to ſhew, however modeſtly, the failures of a celebrated writer, ſhall ſurely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiouſneſs, and malignity.

With this danger full in my view, I ſhall proceed to examine the ſentiments of *Milton*'s tragedy, which, though

though much leſs liable to cenſure than the diſpoſition of his plan, are, like thoſe of other writers, ſometimes expoſed to juſt exceptions for want of care, or want of diſcernment.

Sentiments are proper and improper as they conſiſt more or leſs with the character and circumſtances of the perſon to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the compoſition in which they are found, or with the ſettled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragick poets to introduce their perſons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not poſſibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly diſcovered regions often diſplay their ſkill in *European* learning. The god of love is mentioned in *Tamerlane* with all the familiarity of a *Roman* epigrammatiſt; and a late writer has put *Harvey*'s doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a *Turkiſh* ſtateſman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philoſophers or anatomiſts.

Milton's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the antient eaſtern nations, and his invention, which required no aſſiſtance from the common cant of poetry, have preſerved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned *Chalybean Steel*, of which it is not very likely that his chorus ſhould have heard, and has made *Alp* the general name of a mountain, in a region where the *Alps* could ſcarcely be known:

> No medicinal liquor can aſſuage,
> Nor breath of cooling air from ſnowy *Alp*.

He has taught *Samson* the tales of *Circe*, and the *Syrens*, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with *Dalilah*:

> I know thy trains,
> Tho' dearly to my coſt, thy gins and toils;
> Thy fair *enchanted cup*, and *warbling charms*
> No more on me have pow'r.

But the groſſeſt error of this kind is the ſolemn introduction of the Phœnix in the laſt ſcene; which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the perſonage to whom it is aſcribed, but as it is ſo evidently contrary to reaſon and nature, that it ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in any ſerious poem:

> ——Virtue giv'n for loſt,
> Depreſt, and overthrown, as ſeem'd,
> Like that ſelf-begotten bird
> In the *Arabian* woods emboſt
> That no ſecond knows, nor third,
> And lay ere while a holocauſt;
> From out our aſhy womb now teem'd
> Revives, reflouriſhes, then vigorous moſt
> When moſt unactive deem'd,
> And tho' her body die, her fame ſurvives,
> A ſecular bird ages of lives.

Another ſpecies of impropriety, is the unſuitableneſs of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The ſeriouſneſs and ſolemnity of tragedy neceſſarily rejects all pointed or epigrammatical expreſſions, all remote conceits and oppoſition of ideas. *Samſon*'s complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural:

As

As in the land of darkneſs, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And bury'd; but O yet more miſerable!
Myſelf my ſepulchre, a moving grave!
Bury'd, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worſt of other evils, pains and wrongs.

All alluſions to low and trivial objects, with which contempt is uſually aſſociated, are doubtleſs unſuitable to a ſpecies of compoſition which ought to be always awful, though not always magnificent. The remark therefore of the chorus on good and bad news, ſeems to want elevation:

Manoah. A little ſtay will bring ſome notice hither.

Chor. Of good or bad ſo great, of bad the ſooner;
For evil news *rides poſt*, while good news *baits*.

But of all meanneſs that has leaſt to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which depending only upon ſounds, loſe their exiſtence by the change of a ſyllable. Of this kind is the following dialogue:

Chor. But had we beſt retire? I ſee a *ſtorm*.

Samſ. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.

Chor. But this another kind of tempeſt brings.

Samſ. Be leſs abſtruſe, my riddling days are paſt.

Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his ſtride,
The Giant *Harapha.*——

And yet more deſpicable are the lines in which *Manoah*'s paternal kindneſs is commended by the chorus:

> Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their ſons,
> Thou for thy ſon art bent to *lay out* all;——

Samſon's complaint of the inconveniencies of impriſonment is not wholly without verbal quaintneſs:

> ——I a priſoner chain'd ſcarce freely draw
> The air impriſon'd alſo, cloſe and damp.

From the ſentiments we may properly deſcend to the conſideration of the language, which, in imitation of the antients, is through the whole dialogue remarkably ſimple and unadorned, ſeldom heightened by epithets, or varied by figures; yet ſometimes metaphors find admiſſion, even where their conſiſtency is not accurately preſerved. Thus *Samſon* confounds loquacity with a ſhipwreck:

> How could I once look up, or heave the head,
> Who, like a fooliſh *pilot*, have *ſhipwreck'd*
> My *veſſel* truſted to me from above,
> Glorioufly *rigg'd*; and for a word, a tear,
> Fool, have *divulg'd* the *ſecret gift* of God
> To a deceitful woman?——

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flame in a report,

> He's gone, and who knows how he may *report*
> Thy *words*, by *adding fuel to the flame?*

The verſification is in the dialogue much more ſmooth and harmonious than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often ſo harſh and diſſonant, as ſcarce to preſerve, whether the lines end with

or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity:

> Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
> That heroick, that renown'd,
> Irresistible *Samson*; whom unarm'd
> No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
> Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid?——

Since I have thus pointed out the faults of *Milton*, critical integrity requires that I should endeavour to display his excellencies, though they will not easily be discovered in short quotations, because they consist in the justness of diffuse reasonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues; this play having none of these descriptions, similies, or splendid sentences, with which other tragedies are so lavishly adorned.

Yet some passages may be selected which seem to deserve particular notice, either as containing sentiments of passion, representations of life, precepts of conduct, or sallies of imagination. It is not easy to give a stronger representation of the weariness of despondency, than in the words of *Samson* to his father:

> ——I feel my genial spirits droop,
> My hopes all flat; nature within me seems
> In all her functions weary of herself;
> My race of glory run, and race of shame;
> And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

The reply of *Samson* to the flattering *Dalilah* affords a just and striking description of the stratagems and allurements of feminine hypocrisy:

> ———These are thy wonted arts,
> And arts of ev'ry woman false like thee,
> To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,

Then

Then as repentant to ſubmit, beſeech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorſe,
Confeſs and promiſe wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her huſband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakneſs which way to aſſail:
Then with more cautious and inſtructed ſkill
Again tranſgreſſes, and again ſubmits.

When *Samſon* has refuſed to make himſelf a ſpectacle at the feaſt of *Dagon*, he firſt juſtifies his behaviour to the chorus, who charge him with having ſerved the *Philiſtines*, by a very juſt diſtinction; and then deſtroys the common excuſe of cowardice and ſervility, which always confound temptation with compulſion:

Chor. Yet with thy ſtrength thou ſerv'ſt the *Philiſtines*.
Samſ. Not in their idol worſhip, but by labour
Honeſt and lawful to deſerve my food
Of thoſe who have me in their civil power.
Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.
Samſ. Where outward force conſtrains, the ſentence holds,
But who conſtrains me to the temple of *Dagon*,
Not dragging? The *Philiſtine* lords command.
Commands are no conſtraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to diſpleaſe
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind.

The complaint of blindneſs which *Samſon* pours out at the beginning of the tragedy is equally addreſſed to the paſſions and the fancy. The enumeration of his miſeries is ſucceeded by a very pleaſing train of poetical images, and concluded by ſuch expoſtu-

poſtulations and wiſhes, as reaſon too often ſubmits to learn from deſpair:

O firſt created beam, and thou great word
Let there be light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The ſun to me is dark,
And ſilent as the moon,
When ſhe deſerts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave,
Since light ſo neceſſary is to life,
And almoſt life itſelf; if it be true,
That light is in the ſoul,
She all in ev'ry part; why was the ſight
To ſuch a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
So obvious and ſo eaſy to be quenched,
And not, as feeling, thro' all parts diffus'd,
That ſhe may look at will thro' ev'ry pore?

Such are the faults and ſuch the beauties of *Samſon Agoniſtes*, which I have ſhewn with no other purpoſe than to promote the knowledge of true criticiſm. The everlaſting verdure of *Milton*'s laurels has nothing to fear from the blaſts of malignity; nor can my attempt produce any other effect, than to ſtrengthen their ſhoots by lopping their luxuriance.

END OF THE SIXTH VOLUME.